



Building a stronger
performing arts
community in Ireland.

Review of Pay and Conditions in the Performing Arts Sector in Ireland in 2022

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Executive Summary

Earnings in the arts and entertainment sector are down

The average weekly earnings for the Arts and entertainment sector in Q4 of 2022 was €582.36, 65% of the average for all employees. This is down by 1.8% compared to the same quarter in 2021. Just two other sectors saw a fall. Accommodation and Food Services saw a 4.5% increase.

National average hourly earnings for the arts and entertainment sector were down by 1.2% compared to the same quarter in 2021. All other economic sectors saw a rise.

88% of individuals working in the performing arts sector earned less than the national average weekly earnings.

Although average weekly earnings in the arts and entertainment sector were down by 1.8% compared to the same quarter in 2021, the Consumer Price Index rose by 7.8%.

Basic Income for the Arts

11% of individual respondents to the performing arts sector survey said they had received Basic Income for the Arts in 2022. On average, those from the performing arts received €5,581 from the scheme.

“The artist's basic income would have made a massive difference to me as I entered 2023. It would have given me stability. Allowed me to plan. Freed me up from the many other non-artistic survival jobs that I constantly have to juggle and invest hours into. I can see the enormous difference it made to my friends who were selected for the scheme. A weight was lifted from their shoulders the day they received notification ... you could actually sense the physical change in them, when their daily financial worries were lessened.”

Individual respondent from the performing arts sector

Recruitment crisis

79% of performing arts organisations that needed to recruit in the last quarter of 2022 reported that they encountered difficulties filling full-time, part-time, casual or freelance roles. The situation is likely to become worse with 32% of individual respondents to the performing arts survey saying they are very or extremely concerned that financial pressures will force them to leave the sector in the next six months.

Pension

56% of individual respondents to the performing arts sector survey earned more than the threshold for Pay Related Social Insurance. Of these, 67% in the performing arts did not make any pension contributions in 2022.

Introduction

The research was carried out in partnership with First Music Contact, Ireland's support organisation for the music industry. The Key Findings across both the performing arts and music sectors are [available here](#). This report focuses on the performing arts.

It is in three sections:

Section One analyses pay and conditions in the performing arts in 2022 compared to other economic sectors

Section Two lists the salaries, production fees, weekly fees, and hourly rates paid by festivals, production companies and venues for a wide range of jobs across the performing arts.

Section Three sets out the qualitative information provided by artists, makers, creative practitioners, festivals, production companies and venues in response to the questions:

- What challenges or barriers did you face in the early stages of establishing your chosen career in the performing arts sector?
- What challenges or barriers do you now face in further developing a sustainable career in the performing arts sector?
- What would help address these challenges or barriers?

Research aim

To benchmark pay and conditions within the performing arts sector on the island of Ireland against other economic sectors and against previous surveys of the sectors so that Theatre Forum can:

- advocate for the sector
- enable employers to compare their pay policies with norms for their organisation type and sector area
- enable performing artists to price their work effectively
- design interventions to support the sectors.

Methodology

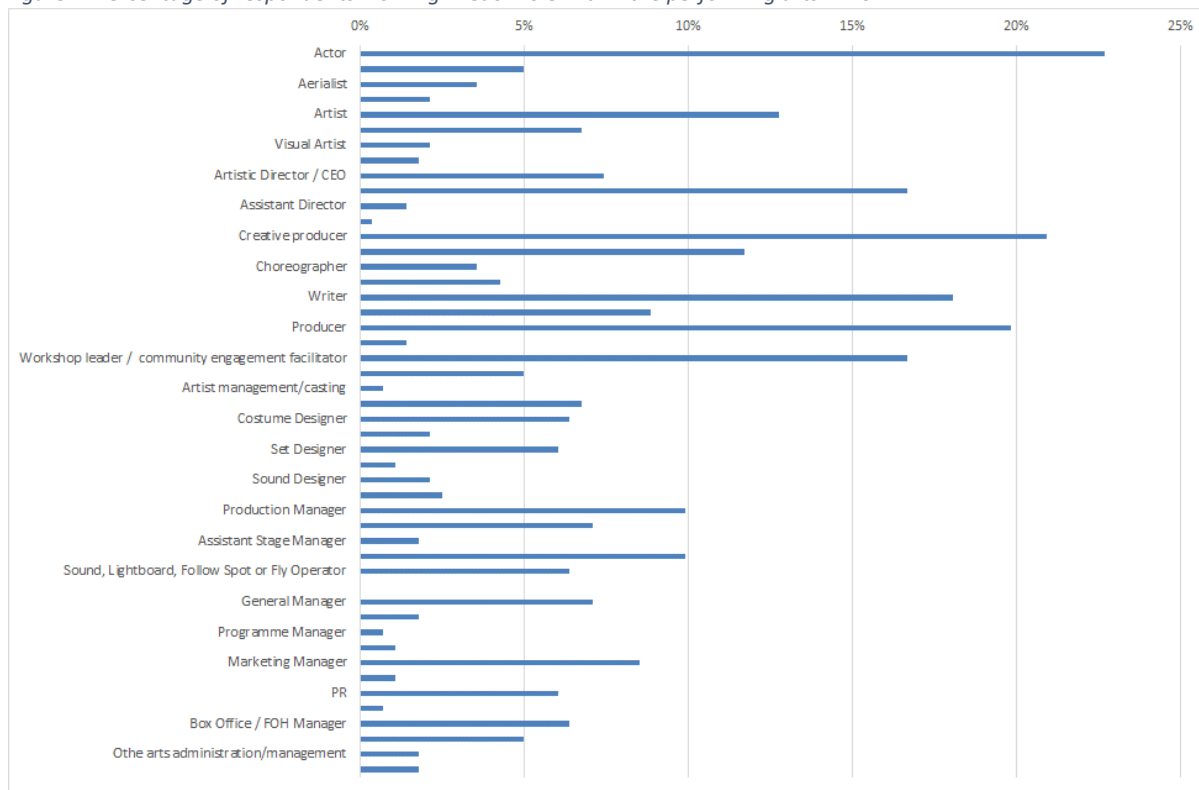
Links to online surveys were sent to individuals, enterprises and organisations working in the performing arts sector through Theatre Forum's own contacts, those of the National Campaign for the Arts and other resource organisations in the performing arts sector. The surveys were designed to gather quantitative and qualitative information about pay, conditions and career pathways in 2022.

135 individuals working in the performing arts and 90 festivals, production companies and venues from across Ireland responded.

About the respondents

59% of individual respondents said they undertook roles directly involved in creating and/or performing theatre, dance, music, comedy, puppetry, circus and street arts and aerial dance.

Figure 1: Percentage of respondents working in each role within the performing arts in 2022



50% of individual respondents were from outside Dublin.

Respondents were at various stages in their careers. 12% of individual respondents to the performing arts survey had been working in the sector for five years or less and half for more than 12 years. A quarter had been working in the sector for 24 years or more.

14 festivals, 20 companies and 51 venues responded to the relevant survey.

Definitions

Venues refers to professionally run theatres, arts centres and other performance spaces programming the professional performing arts year-round.

Average refers to the arithmetical mean unless otherwise stated. The analysis also uses *medians* – the mid-point in the data where half of the responses are higher and half lower – as the mean can be distorted by a small number of outliers which are much higher or much lower than the rest of the responses.

Section One: Key Findings

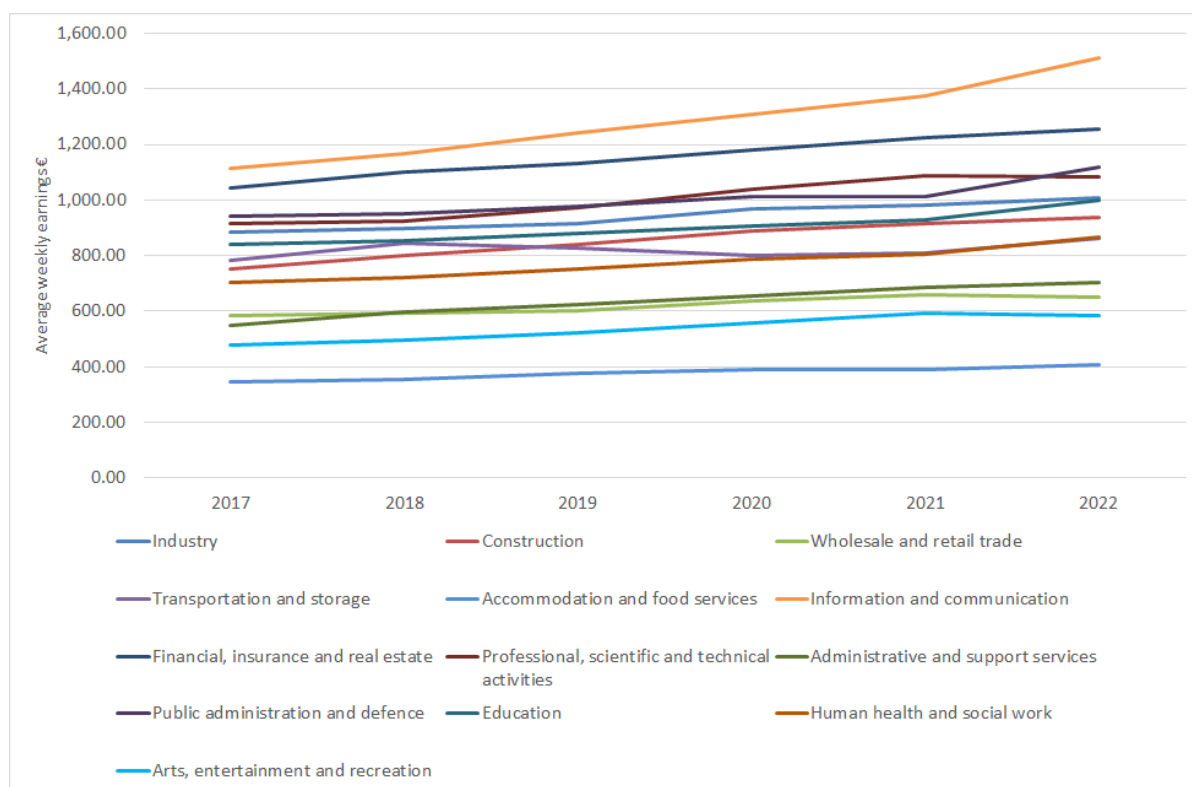
Income

Weekly income

Official national data

The Central Statistics Office's Earnings and Labour Costs survey indicates that the national average weekly earnings for all employees in the last quarter of 2022 was €900.26, up 4.2% compared to the same quarter in 2021.¹

Figure 2: Quarter 4 average weekly earnings by economic sector 2017 - 2023



The average weekly earnings for the Arts and entertainment sector was €582.36, 65% of the average for all employees. This is down by 1.8% from €592.75 in the last quarter of 2021. Just two other sectors saw a fall, both smaller than for Arts and entertainment. (Wholesale and retail trade -1.1%, Professional, Scientific and Technical activities -0.3%). Accommodation and Food Services saw a 4.5% increase.

Although average weekly earnings in the arts and entertainment sector were down by 1.8% compared to the same quarter in 2021, the Consumer Price Index rose by 7.8% in 2022 compared to 2021.

¹ This includes regular earnings, overtime earnings and irregular earnings and is based on all enterprises in the Republic of Ireland with 50 or more employees and a sample with between three and 49 employees. <https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-elcq/earningsandlabourcostsq32022finalq42022preliminaryestimates/>

Overall, the private sector showed a 2.0% increase and the public sector had a backdated pay increase of 3% which resulted in an uplift of 10.8%.

Figure 3: Quarter 4 average weekly earnings in the public sector compared to the arts and entertainment sector 2017-2023

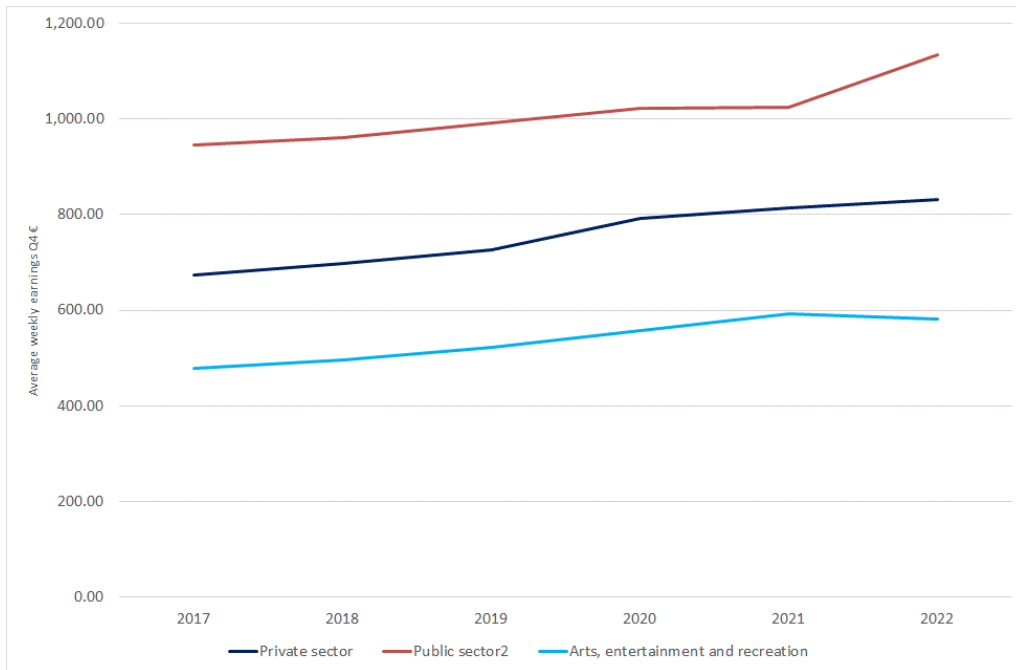
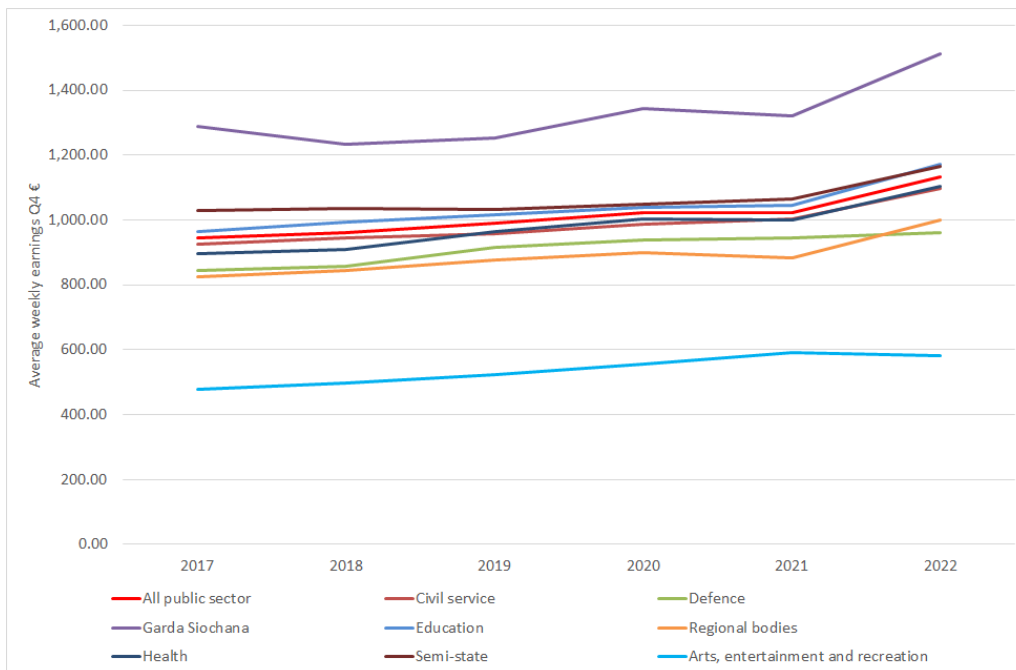


Figure 4: Quarter 4 average weekly earnings in the public sector by subsector compared to the arts and entertainment sector 2017-2023



Enterprises with fewer than 50 employees saw a fall of 0.3% in weekly earnings, while larger enterprises saw uplifts, 1.9% in companies with 50-250 employees and 6.7% in companies with more than 250 employees.

The five economic sectors with the lowest average weekly earnings are:

	€
Accommodation and food services	408.63
Arts, entertainment, recreation and other service activities	582.36
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	652.08
Administrative and support services	703.99
Transportation and storage	862.62

Comparison with national data

Comparisons are approximate. Working patterns in the performing arts sector mean that only 26% of respondents rely solely on full-time or part-time employment with the rest earning at least some of their income as a self-employed freelancer or contractor. The sample for the Central Statistics Office's Earnings and Labour Costs survey excludes self-employed people.

Note that, as the following are medians, by definition, half of respondents earned less.

The median weekly income from all sources for individual respondents was €596.15. Outside Dublin this was €576.92 and in Dublin it was €622.10.

Career stage

Career stage affects income. The average weekly income from all sources for respondents who have worked in the performing arts for less than eight years is €515.32 and for those who have worked between nine and 13 years is €580.30. This compares to €605.20 for those who have worked between 14 and 23 years and €653.62 for those who have worked for more than 23 years in the sector.

88% of individuals working in the performing arts sector earned less than the national average weekly earnings.

Annual income

The median annual income from all sources for individual respondents working in the performing arts sector is €30,050. This ranges between €5,000 and €86,000.

Hourly earnings

Official national data

National average hourly earnings for all employees including regular earnings, overtime earnings and irregular earnings in the last quarter of 2022 was €27.72. For the arts and

entertainment sector it was €20.35, down by 1.2% compared to the same quarter in 2021. All other economic sectors saw a rise in hourly earnings.

The five sectors with the lowest average hourly earnings are as follows:

	€
Accommodation and food services	15.33
Arts, entertainment, recreation and other service activities	20.35
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	21.47
Administrative and support services	21.97
Transportation and storage	23.78

Figure 5: Quarter 4 average hourly earnings by economic sector 2017 - 2023

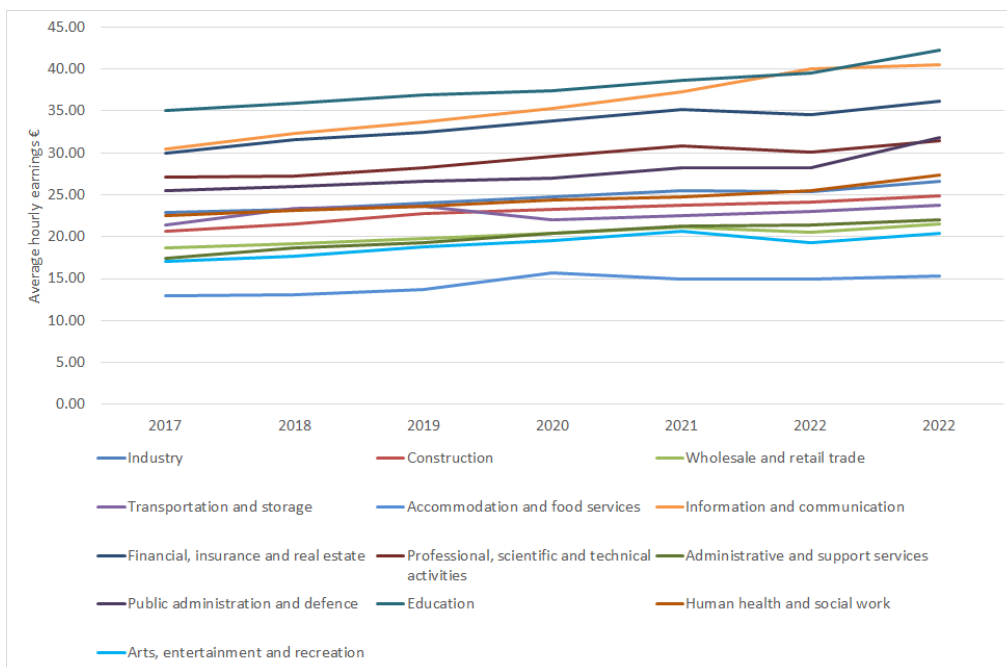
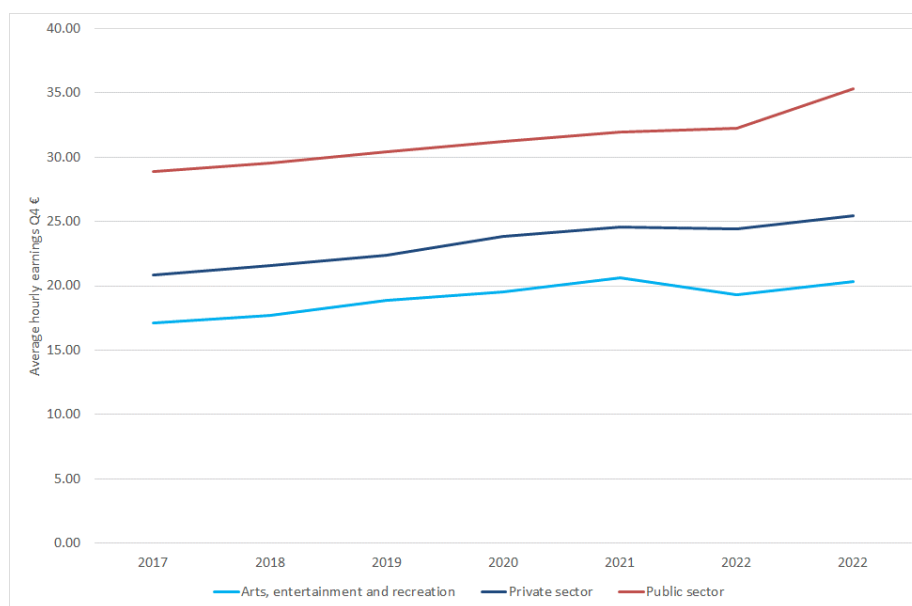


Figure 6: Quarter 4 average hourly earnings in the public sector by subsector compared to the arts and entertainment sector 2017-2023



Performing arts

The median hourly earnings for the performing arts sector was €17.31. 72% of respondents earned less than the overall national average hourly earnings and 68% earned less than the national average for the arts and entertainment sector. 16% earned less than the national minimum wage of €10.50.

Income from the performing arts

On average, individual respondents to the performing arts sector survey in paid work earned €18,383 from work related to their creative practice in 2022. The median is €15,000 with earnings from arts-related work ranging from €880 to €85,000.

45% earned more than 80% of their total annual income from performing arts-related work but 26% earned less than 20%. 38% earned all their income and 16% earned none of their income from performing arts-related work.

Basic Income for the Arts

11% of individual respondents to the performing arts sector survey said they had received Basic Income for the Arts in 2022. On average, they received €5,581 from the scheme.

“The basic income scheme for people working in the arts will be hugely helpful to so many who may not be able to rely on a steady income if it is expanded and implemented well.”

“The artist's basic income would have made a massive difference to me as I entered 2023. It would given me stability. Allowed me to plan. Freed me

up from the many other non-artistic survival jobs that I constantly have to juggle and invest hours into. I can see the enormous difference it made to my friends who were selected for the scheme. A weight was lifted from their shoulders the day they received notification. They weren't even fully aware how they were carrying that weight up to that point, but you could actually sense the physical change in them, when their daily financial worries were lessened."

Individual respondents from the performing arts sector

Comparison with 2019

19% report a reduction in their income from the performing arts in 2022 compared to 2019 (with 13% reporting a substantial reduction). 30% report a substantial increase. Just 11% of these respondents were in receipt of Basic Income for the Arts so this has had only a limited impact on this comparison.

Other support

48% of individual respondents relied wholly on their earnings from the sector (including teaching related to their creative practice or the performing arts).

27% of those in the performing arts rely on income from another member of their household, family or friends.

Figure 7: In 2022, was your work in the performing arts made financially possible by:

	No. of respondents	% of respondents
Income from work outside your sector	26	20%
Income from another source in 2022 e.g. another member of your household, family or friends?	36	27%
Social welfare payments or benefits	22	17%
Housing benefits e.g., HAP or Rent Supplement	3	2%
None of these	63	48%
Can't remember	2	2%
Base: no. of responses	132	
No response	3	

Portfolio careers

In order to earn enough to live on, individuals working in the performing arts sector have developed a range of skills sets and experience so they can fill a wider range of roles. 59% said they were directly involved in creating and/or performing but they also fulfilled other roles, on average 3.5 roles within the performing arts.

39% said they worked in other areas of the cultural sector, for example teaching not related to their creative practice, project management etc.

Financial security

Pension

56% of individual respondents to the performing arts sector survey earned more than the threshold for Pay Related Social Insurance. Of these, 67% in the performing arts did not make any pension contributions in 2022.

43% of performing arts organisations did not have a pension/PRSA arrangement in place for staff at the end of December 2022. Just 24% have a pension scheme and make employer contributions.

Health insurance

53% of individual respondents to the performing arts survey did not have health insurance in 2022. Of those who did have health insurance, 36% were not the policy holder.

Maternity Pay

31% of performing arts organisations said they provided a top up to state maternity benefit. Half of these were to full salary and half to a proportion of salary.

Paternity leave

34% of performing arts organisations said they offered paternity leave with all but two at 10 days. Of the two, one offers five days and the other 20.

Difficulty in recruiting

"All the skilled roles proved difficult [to recruit]."

Performing arts venue

79% of performing arts organisations that needed to recruit in the last quarter of 2022 reported that they encountered difficulties filling full-time, part-time, casual or freelance roles. 72% found it difficult to fill technical roles (including wardrobe), 51% low paid administration or operational roles and 25% senior production roles (e.g., lighting or sound designers).

The situation is likely to become worse with 32% of individual respondents saying they are very or extremely concerned that financial pressures will force them to leave the sector in the next six months.

"I am middle aged and live at home because I can't afford rent or a mortgage. There is seemingly no interest in improving my pay in my current role, despite me bringing a breadth of varied experience and skill that cover the workload of multiple employees on my tiny wage. I am overworked and feel undervalued, I see no option for personal or professional career development, and now realise that if I am to improve

my life situation, I must consider leaving this sector and taking my skills and experience elsewhere. Something that is emotionally very hard to do, as I have put so much into the last decade.”

Individual respondent in the performing arts sector

Longer hours and lower pay

Individual respondents to the performing arts survey report that the pressure on budgets caused by the cost-of-living increase which has impacted on touring in particular and has resulted in smaller crews with senior members having to fill in for missing support roles.

“There is a dearth of stage managers and producers, so it feels like the work is never-ending/it's hard to say no to projects because there is nobody else to take them on.”

Individual respondent in the performing arts sector

“I actually earn more when I work as a technical crew member working by the hour than as a Designer, especially because working as a Designer you spend more hours working in the creative field and also doing extra work when productions don't hire crew (e.g., costume supervisor, costume crew, maintenance, prop making, etc.).”

Individual respondent in the performing arts sector

Barriers to entry

29% of individual respondents to the performing arts survey got their first paid job through an open call or application process. 34% of respondents got their first paid job through a friend or other personal contact made through socialising or networking. This is the second biggest issue after low pay for respondents in the performing arts with 27% saying that success depends entirely on who you know.

Key issues for respondents

1. Expected to work unpaid or for very low wages e.g., unpaid overtime /flat fees for long hours
2. Success entirely depends on who you know: a closed shop
3. Difficult to balance developing arts career with need to work to earn a living and home responsibilities (therefore lack of time, availability for work related to their creative practice and impact on mental health)
4. No financial security/stability now or in future
5. Few opportunities in Ireland because people stay put so the sector is very competitive
6. Lack of confidence
7. Getting work depends on building reputation/experience which you can't do without getting work.

See Section Three for details

Section Two: Salaries, Fees and Rates

A: PAYE Salaries

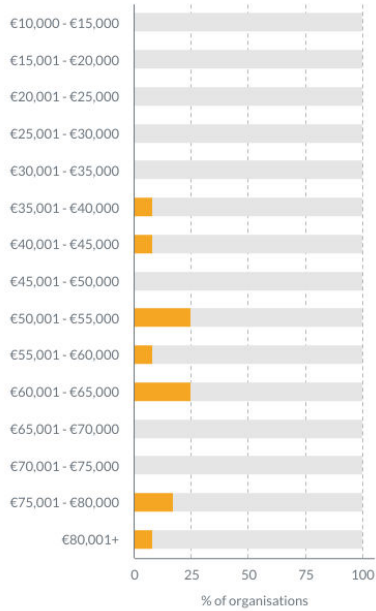
Festivals

Artistic Director/ Director/ CEO

12 responses

Average pay: €61,730

Range: €40,000 - €94,000



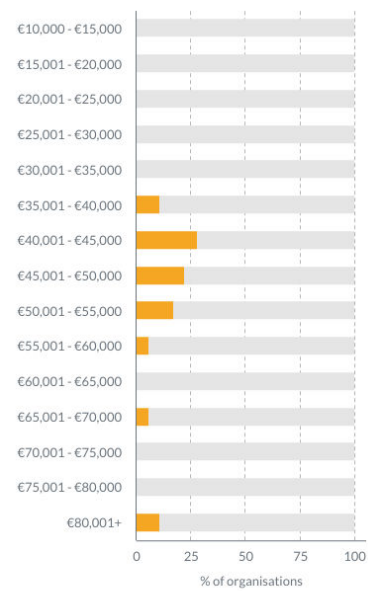
Production Companies

Artistic Director/ Director/ CEO

18 responses

Average pay: €54,059

Range: €36,000 - €103,556



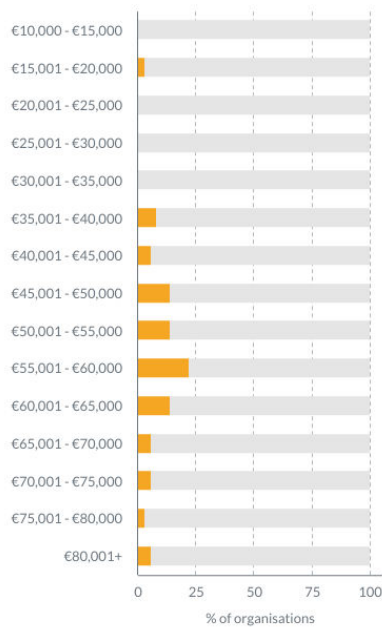
Venues

Artistic Director/ Director/ CEO

36 responses

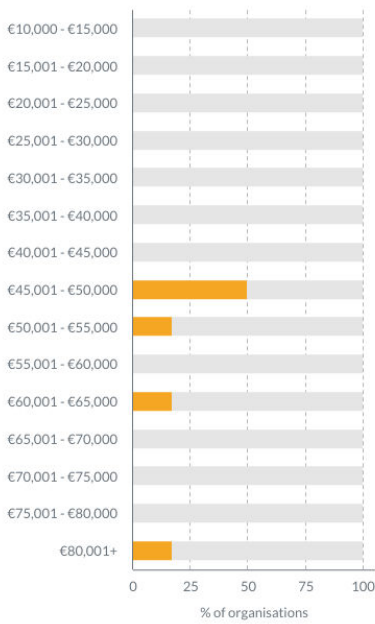
Average pay: €58,921

Range: €18,144 - €115,000



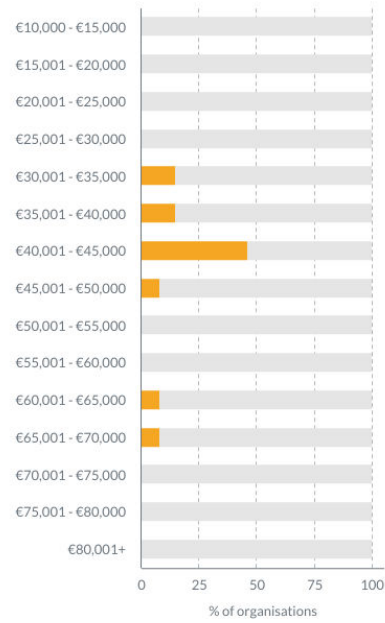
Festivals
General Manager

6 responses
Average pay: €52,500
Range: €46,500 - €61,000



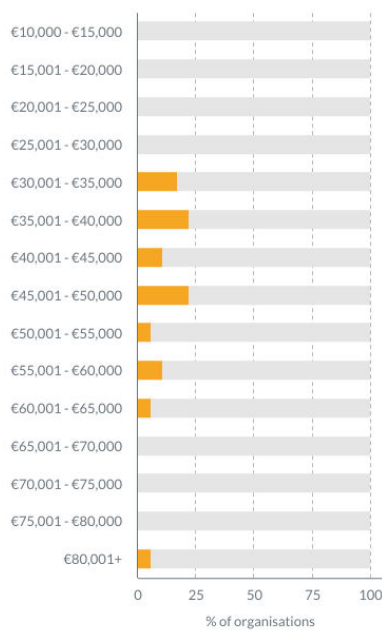
Production Companies
General Manager

13 responses
Average pay: €45,137
Range: €35,000 - €68,880



Venues
General Manager

18 responses
Average pay: €44,895
Range: €35,000 - €63,000



Production Companies

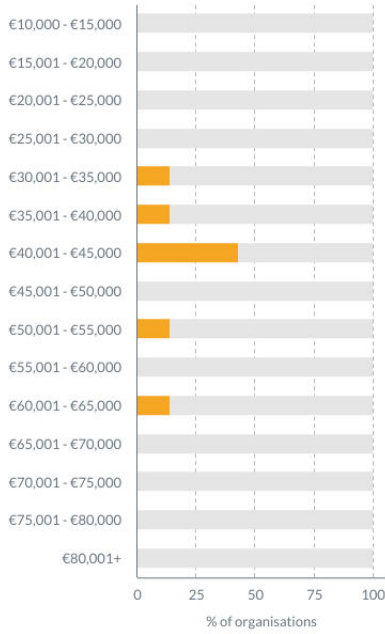
Festivals

Executive Producer

7 responses

Average pay: €45,638

Range: €32,000 - €65,000

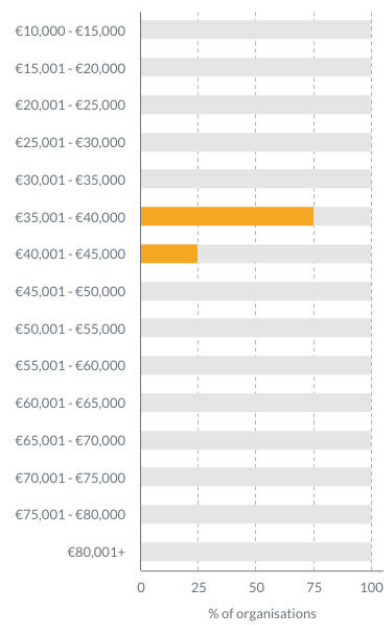


Producer

4 responses

Average pay: €39,981

Range: €37,720 - €42,202



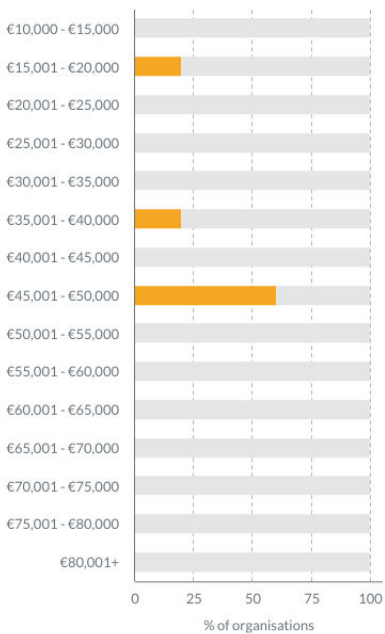
Venues

Producer

5 responses

Average pay: €40,544

Range: €16,718 - €50,000



Festivals

Programme Manager

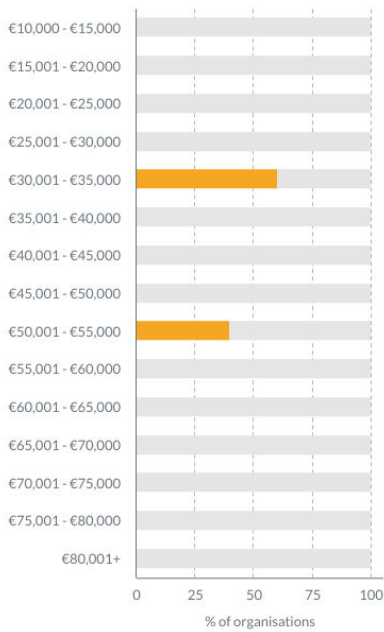
Venues

Programme/Events Manager

5 responses

Average pay: €41,162

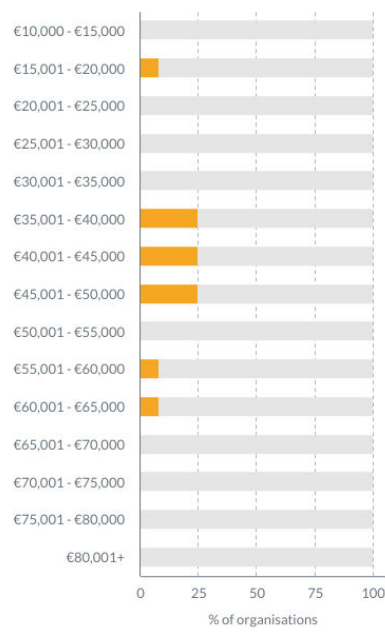
Range: €30,810 - €55,000



12 responses

Average pay: €44,422

Range: €20,000 - €65,000



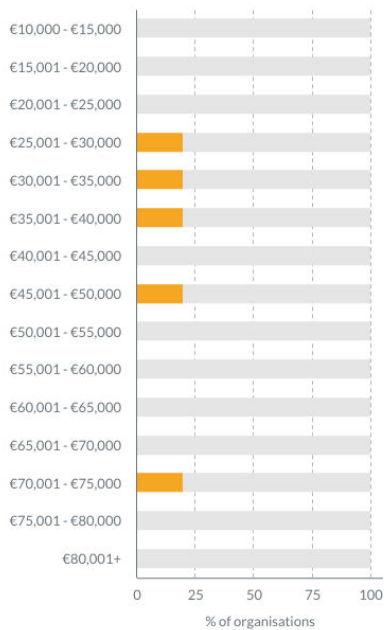
Venues

Gallery Manager/Curator

5 responses

Average pay: €38,211

Range: €28,000 - €78,000



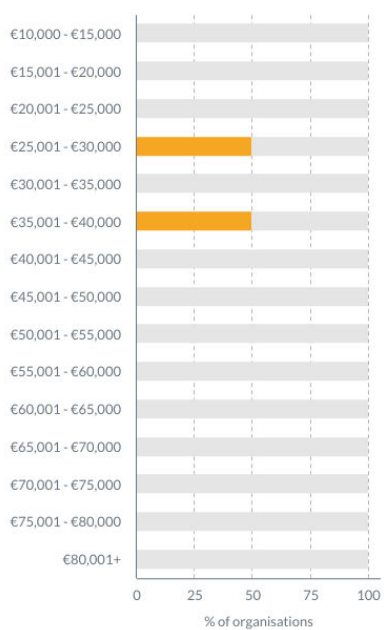
Venues

Artist-Educator/Community Artist

2 responses

Average pay: €31,208

Range: €26,415 - €36,000



Festivals

Administrator

Production Companies

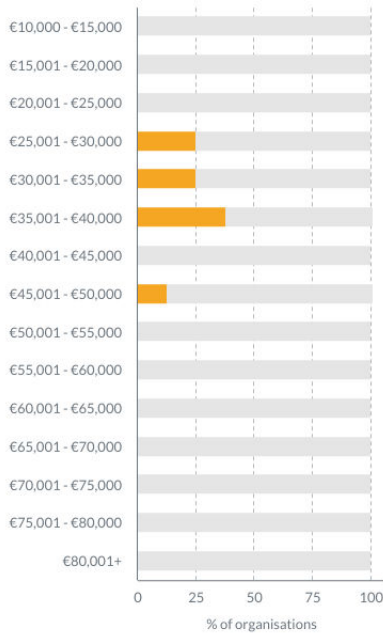
Administrator

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8 responses

Average pay: €35,138

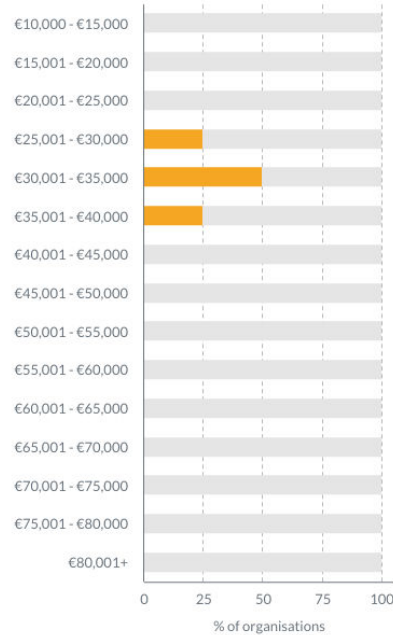
Range: €26,000 - €48,500



8 responses

Average pay: €33,324

Range: €25,200 - €38,735



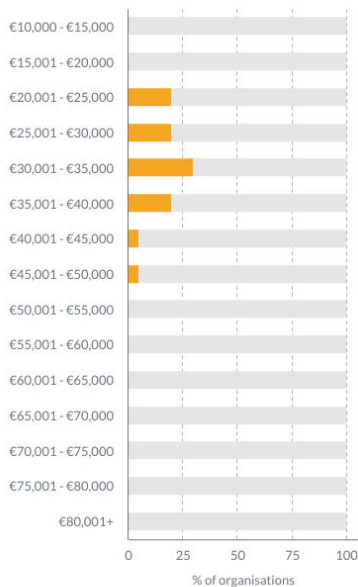
Venues

Administrator

20 responses

Average pay: €31,756

Range: €22,288 - €45,398



Festivals

Finance Officer/Bookkeeper

4 responses

Production Companies

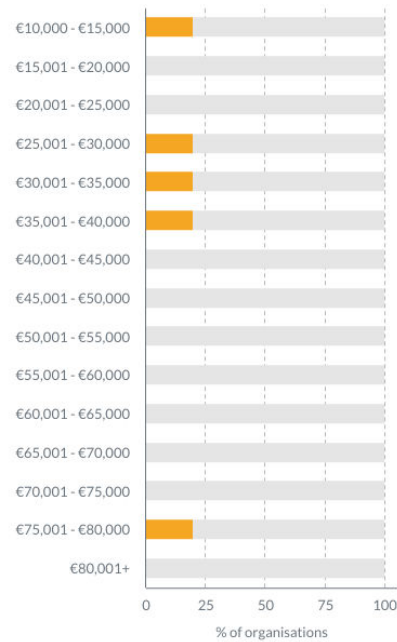
Finance Officer/Bookkeeper

5 responses

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Average pay: €38,715
Range: €32,000 - €45,760

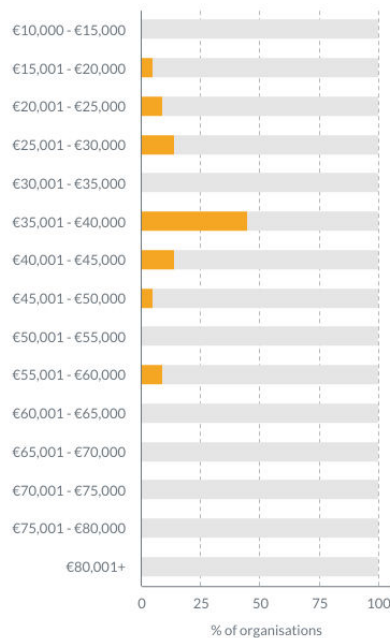
Average pay: €37,000
Range: €12,000 - €76,000



Venues

Finance Officer/Bookkeeper

22 responses
Average pay: €31,756
Range: €22,288 - €45,398



Venues

Production Manager

4 responses
Average pay: €40,925

Production Companies

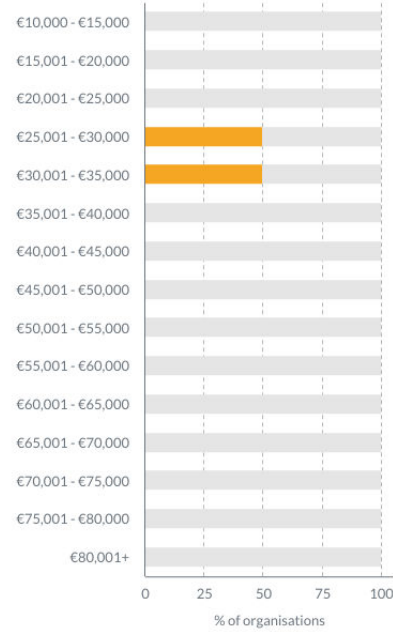
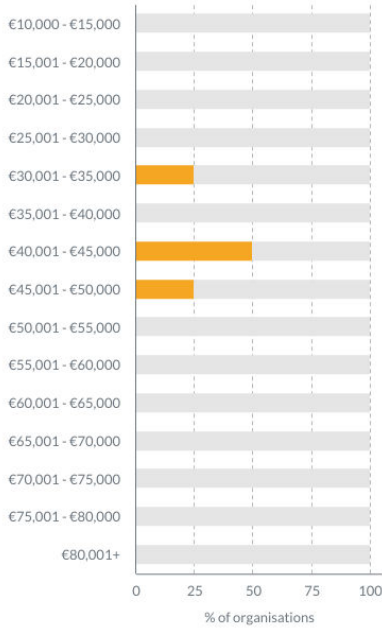
Technical Manager

2 responses
Average pay: €32,500

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Range: €35,000 - €46,000

Range: €30,000 - €35,000

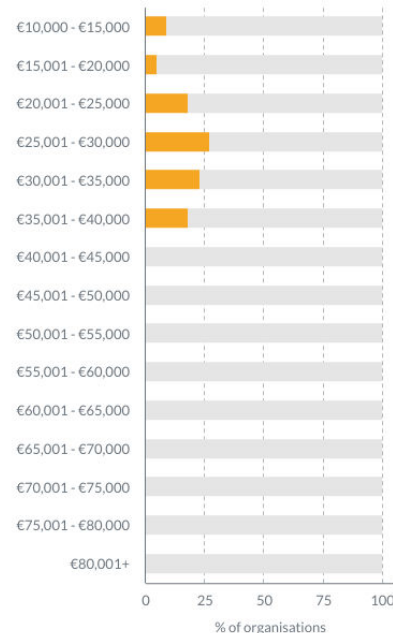
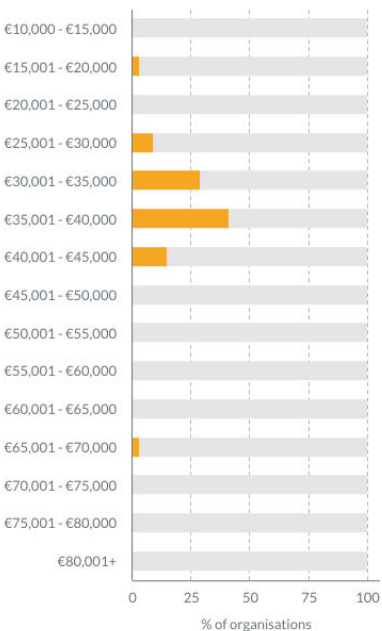


Venues
Technical Manager

34 responses
Average pay: €45,825
Range: €29,870 - €74,880

Venues
Technical Assistant

22 responses
Average pay: €36,575
Range: €16,718 - €70,000

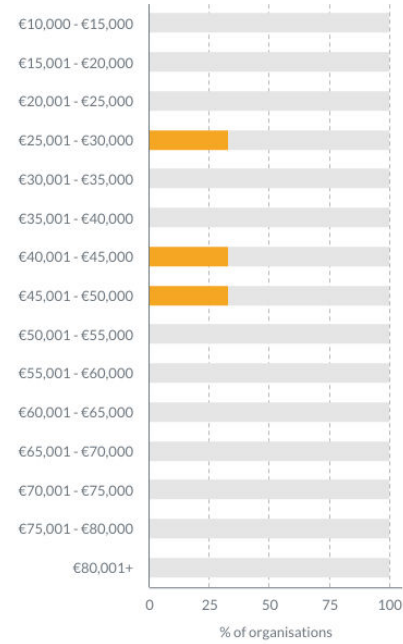


Festivals
Development Manager

6 responses
Average pay: €45,833
Range: €35,000 - €80,000

Production Companies
Development Manager

3 responses
Average pay: €41,667
Range: €30,000 - €50,000



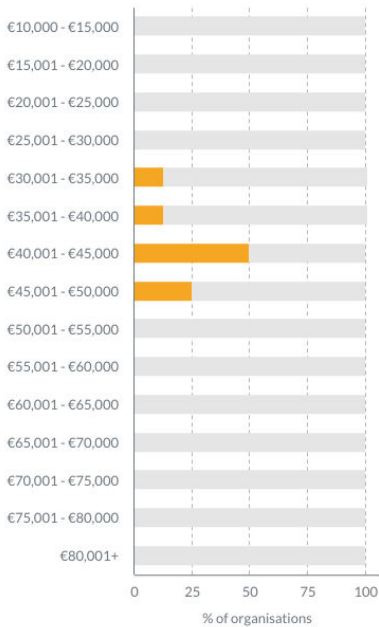
Venues

Development Manager

8 responses

Average pay: €38,618

Range: €60,000 - €50,000



Production Companies

Education/Outreach

4 responses

Average pay: €32,412

Range: €25,000 - €39,000

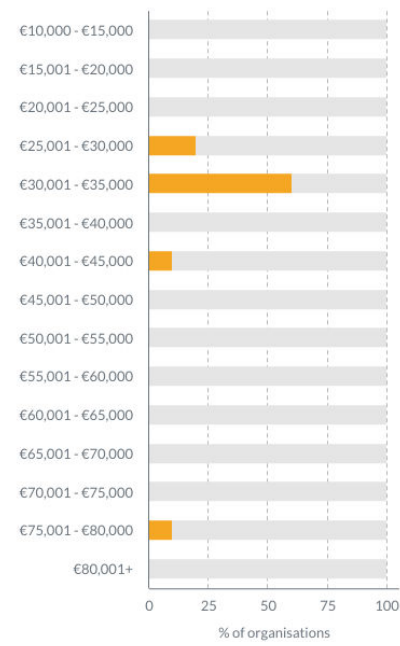
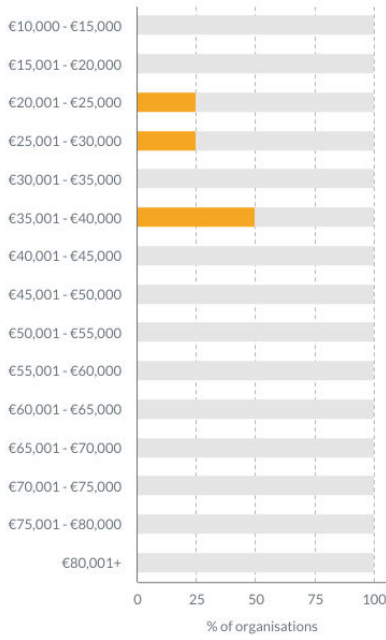
Venues

Education/Outreach Officer

10 responses

Average pay: €30,642

Range: €27,926 - €32,000



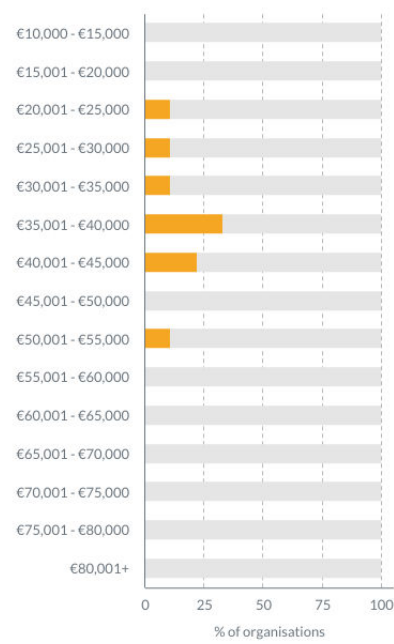
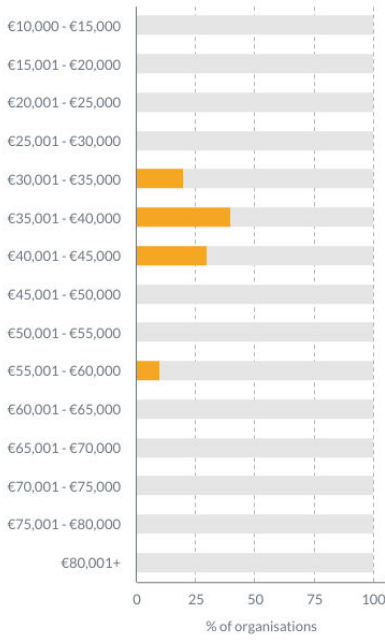
**Festivals
Marketing Manager**

10 responses
 Average pay: €41,237
 Range: €33,000 - €60,000

**Production Companies
Marketing Manager**

9 responses
 Average pay: €38,204
 Range: €22,000 - €51,978

Theatre Forum: Review of Pay and Conditions in the Performing Arts 2022

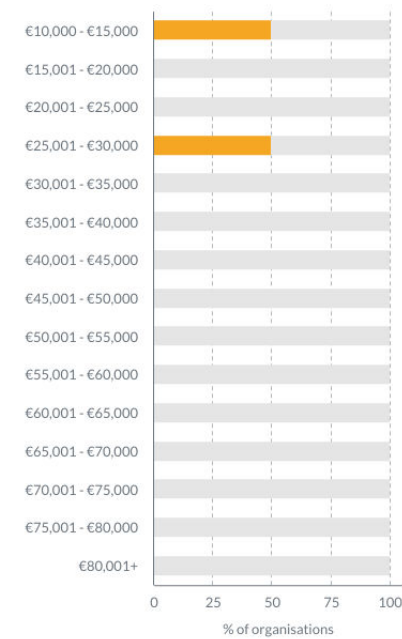
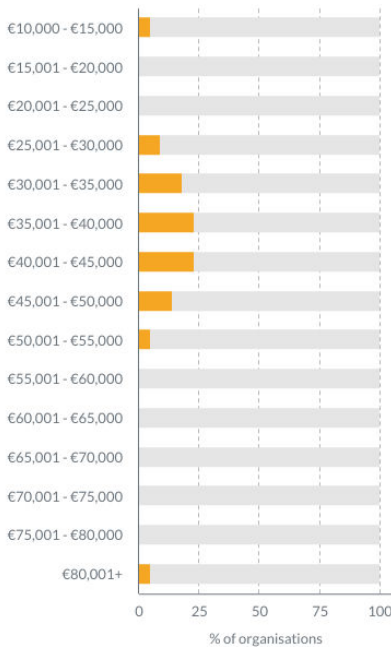


**Venues
Marketing Manager**

22 responses
Average pay: €40,864
Range: €14,100 - €84,000

**Festivals
Marketing Assistant**

2 responses
Average pay: €20,750
Range: €13,500 - €28,000

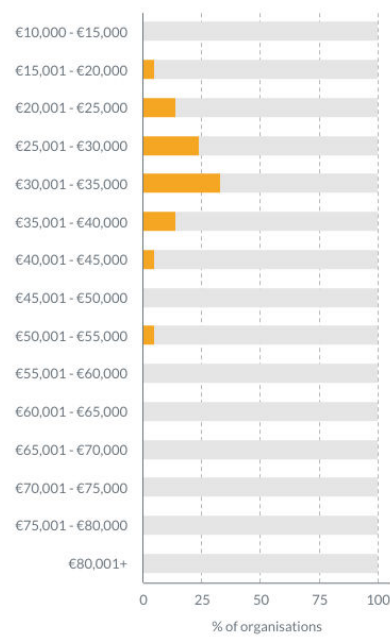
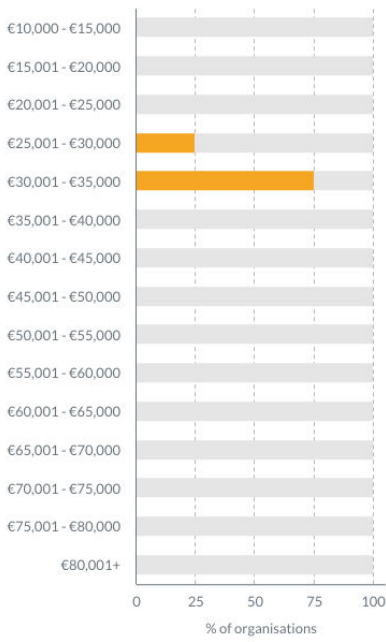


**Festivals
Box Office Manager**

4 responses
Average pay: €31,895
Range: €30,000 - €33,600

**Venues
Box Office Manager**

21 responses
Average pay: €31,450
Range: €16,000 - €50,055

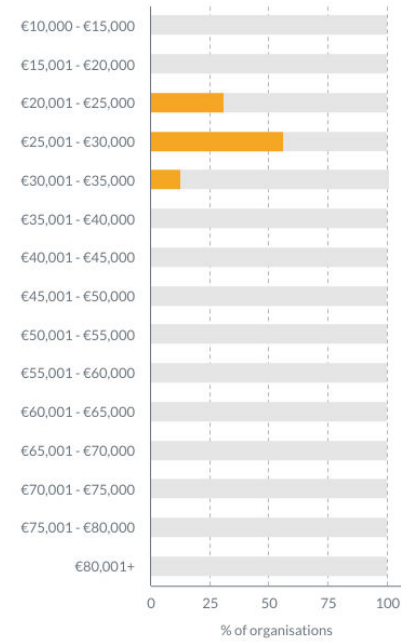
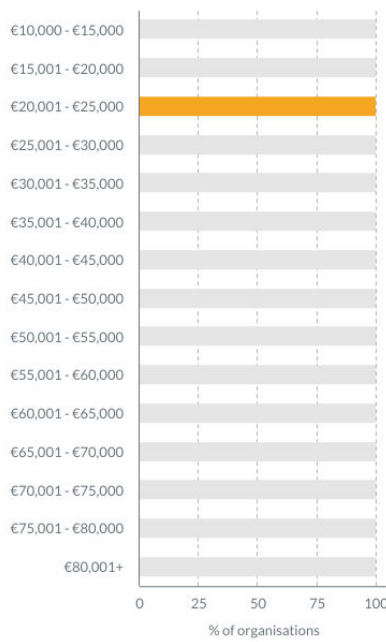


Festivals
Box Office Assistant

2 responses
Average pay: €24,980
Range: €24,960 - €25,000

Venues
Box Office Assistant

16 responses
Average pay: €25,904
Range: €6,500 - €35,000

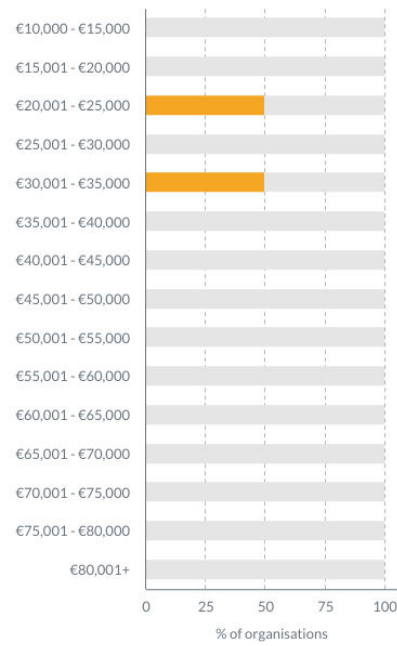
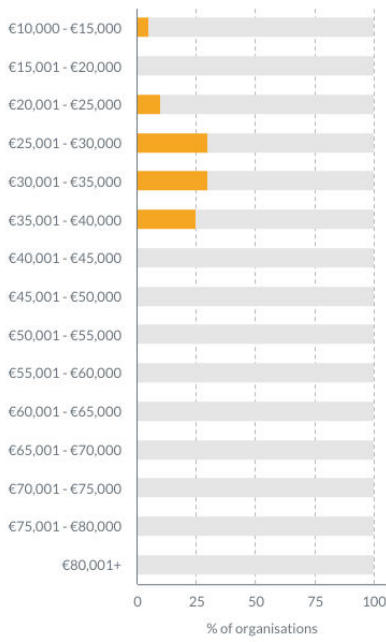


Venues
Front of House/Visitor Services Manager

20 responses
Average pay: €30,898
Range: €12,000 - €40,000

Venues
Café/Bar Manager/Supervisor

2 responses
Average pay: €25,943
Range: €20,686 - €31,200

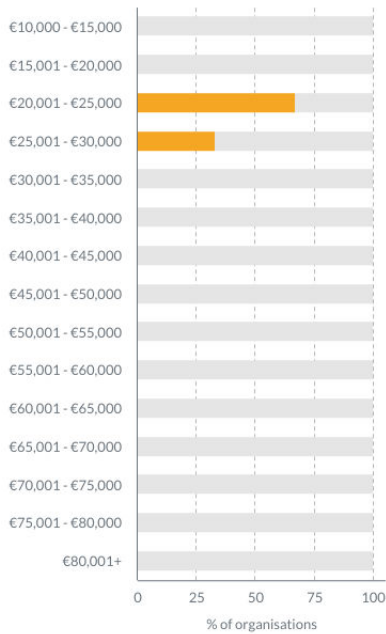


**Venues
Caretaker**

3 responses

Average pay: €24,597

Range: €22,900 - €26,891



Section Two: Salaries, Fees and Rates

B: Flat Fees per Production

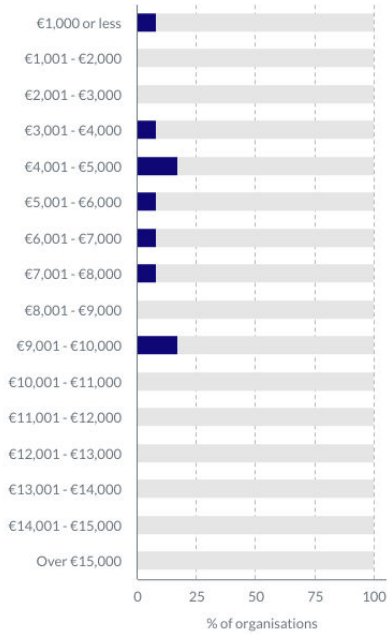
Production companies

Director

12 responses

Average pay: €5,995

Range: €1,000 - €10,000



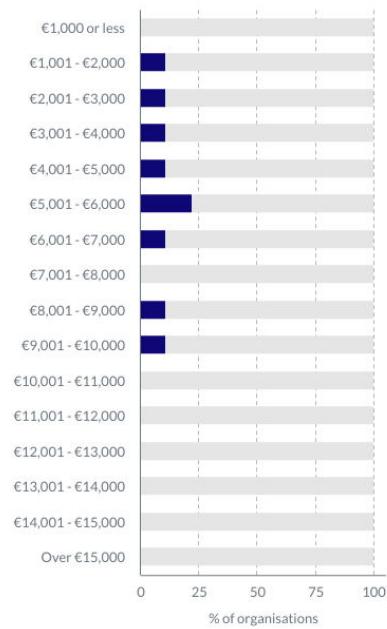
Venues

Director

9 responses

Average pay: €5,667

Range: €1,600 - €16,600



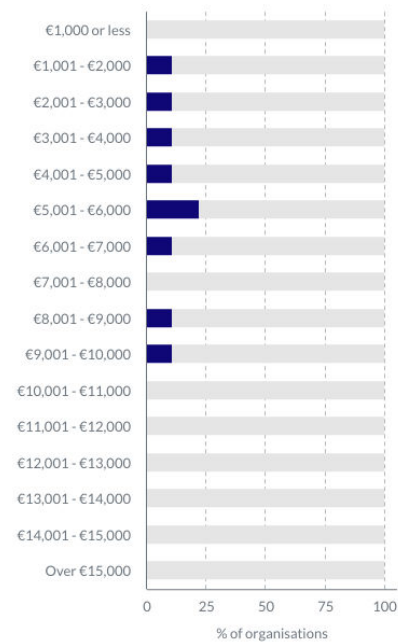
Production companies

Assistant Director

4 responses

Average pay: €7,075

Range: €3,000 - €18,800



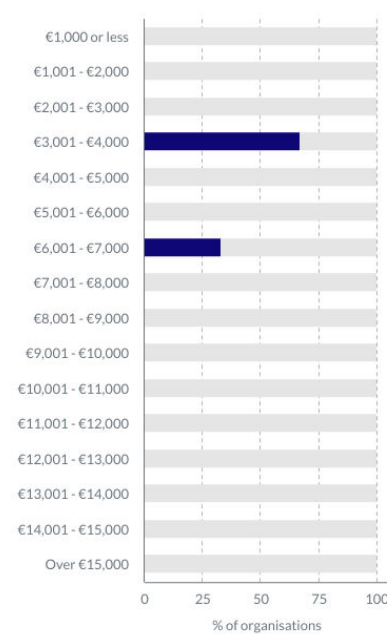
Venues

Assistant Director

3 responses

Average pay: €4,833

Range: €3,500 - €7,000



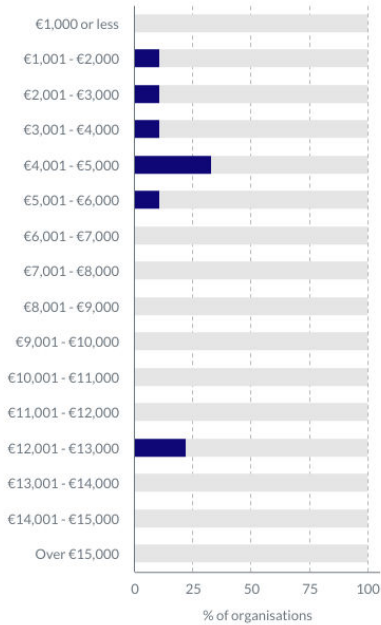
Production companies

Composer

9 responses

Average pay: €6,056

Range: €1,500 - €13,000



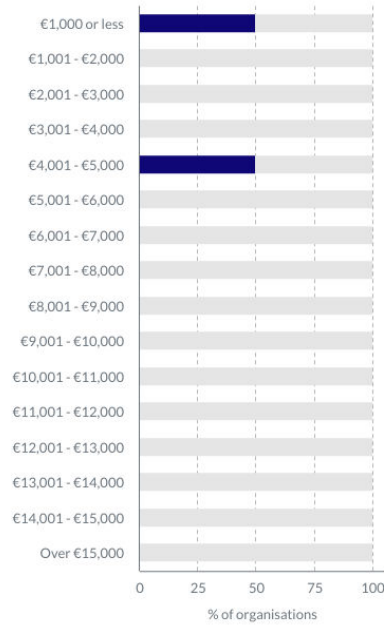
Venues

Composer

2 responses

Average pay: €2,375

Range: €500 - €4,250



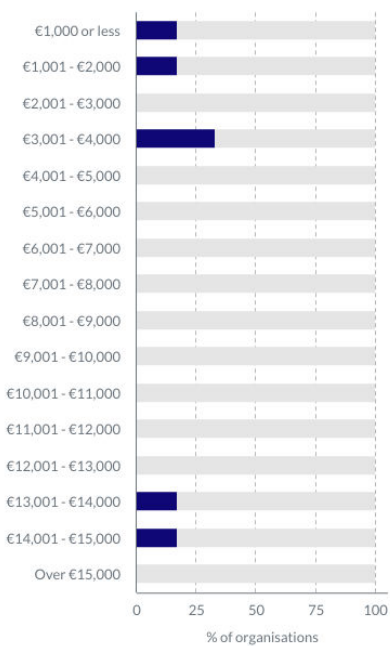
Production companies

Choreographer

6 responses

Average pay: €6,317

Range: €1,000 - €15,000



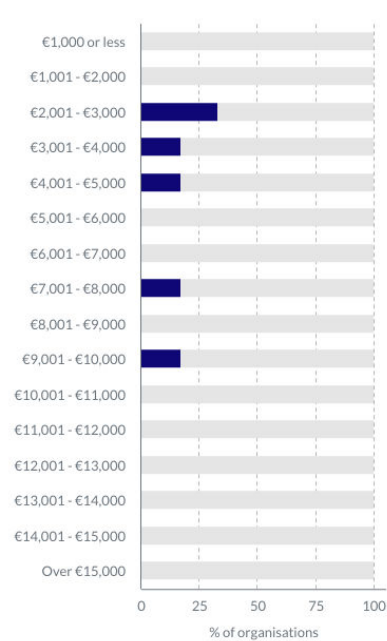
Production companies

Producer

4 responses

Average pay: €4,625

Range: €500 - €10,000



Production companies

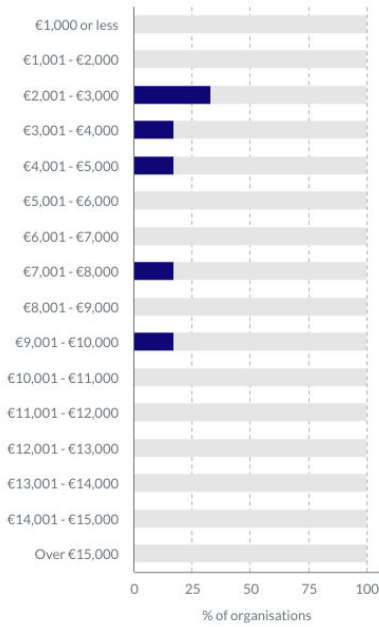
Production companies

Writer

6 responses

Average pay: €4,643

Range: €500 - €10,000



Dramaturg

4 responses

Average pay: €2,625

Range: €1,500 - €3,000



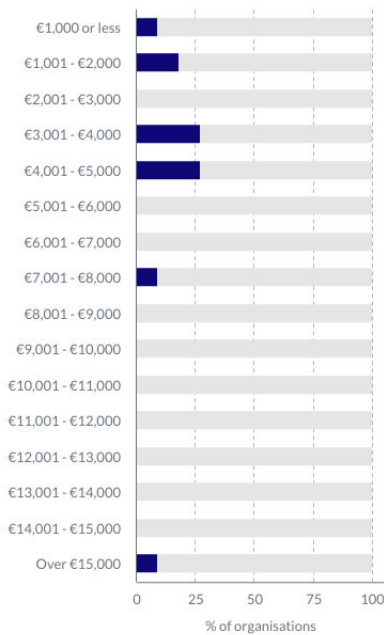
Production companies

Set Designer

11 responses

Average pay: €4,970

Range: €500 - €18,900



Venues

Set Designer

11 responses

Average pay: €4,109

Range: €1,000 - €8,000



Production companies

Set AND Costume Designer

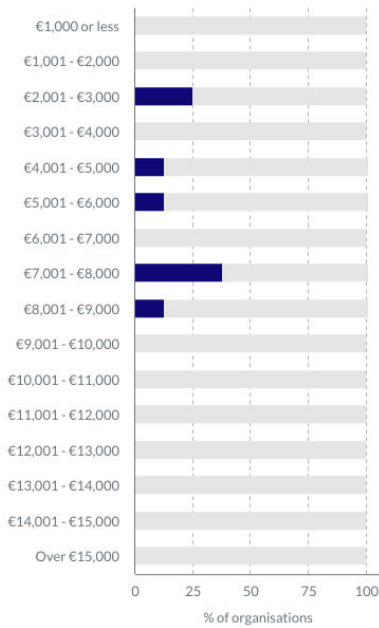
Production companies

Costume Designer

8 responses

Average pay: €5,900

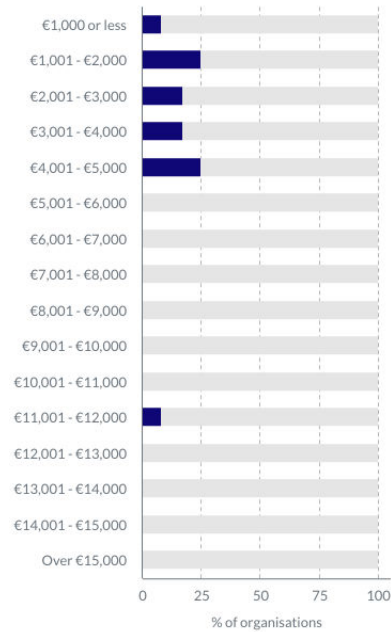
Range: €2,500 - €9,000



12 responses

Average pay: €3,788

Range: €500 - €12,000



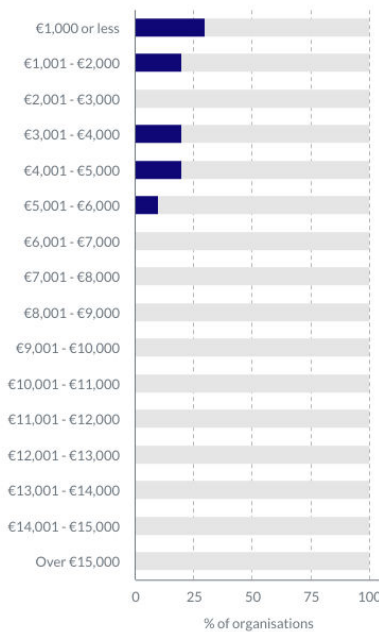
Venues

Costume Designer

10 responses

Average pay: €2,800

Range: €500 - €6,000



Production companies

Lighting Designer

Venues

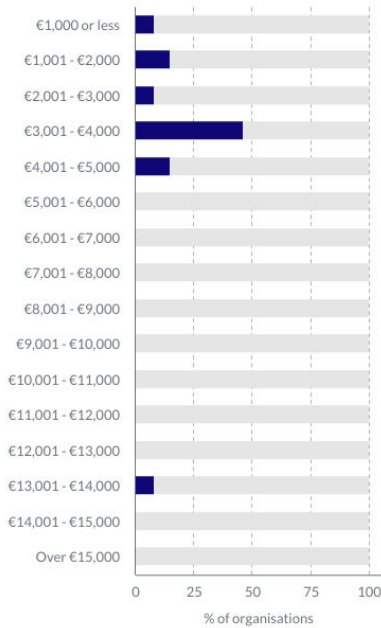
Lighting Designer

Theatre Forum: Review of Pay and Conditions in the Performing Arts 2022

13 responses

Average pay: €4,154

Range: €500 - €13,500



11 responses

Average pay: €3,218

Range: €500 - €8,000



Production companies

Relight fee per venue on tour

4 responses

Average pay: €1,163

Range: €150 - €2,500



Production companies

Sound Designer

13 responses

Venues

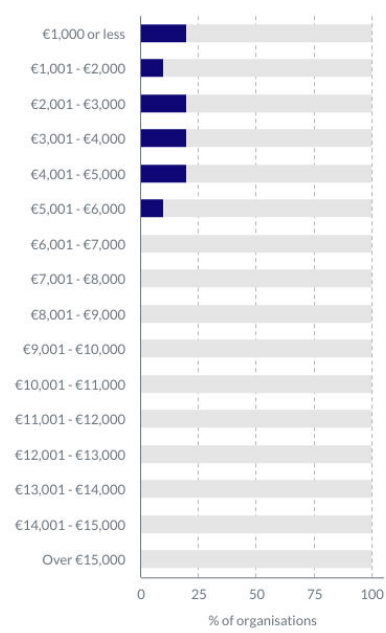
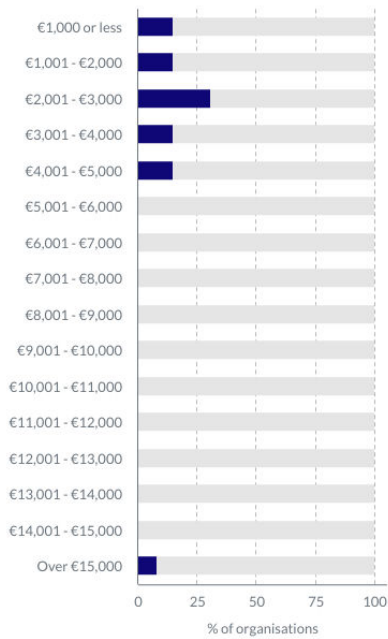
Sound Designer

10 responses

Theatre Forum: Review of Pay and Conditions in the Performing Arts 2022

Average pay: €3,553
Range: €500 - €15,050

Average pay: €3,025
Range: €500 - €6,000

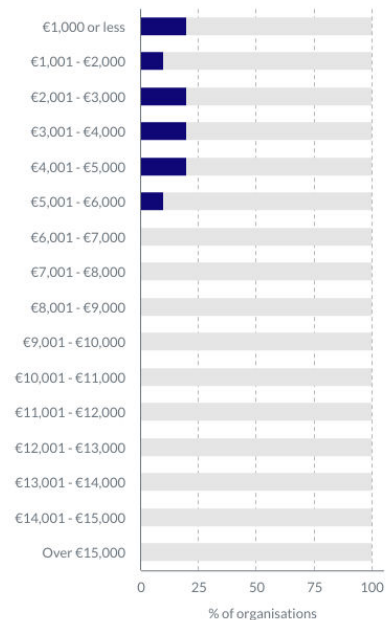
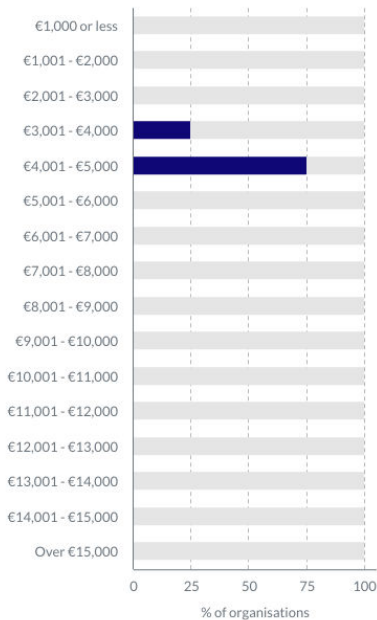


Production companies
Creative Producer

4 responses
Average pay: €4,594
Range: €4,000 - €5,000

Venues
Creative Producer

5 responses
Average pay: €3,700
Range: €2,000 - €5,500



Festivals
Production Manager

7 responses
Average pay: €12,860

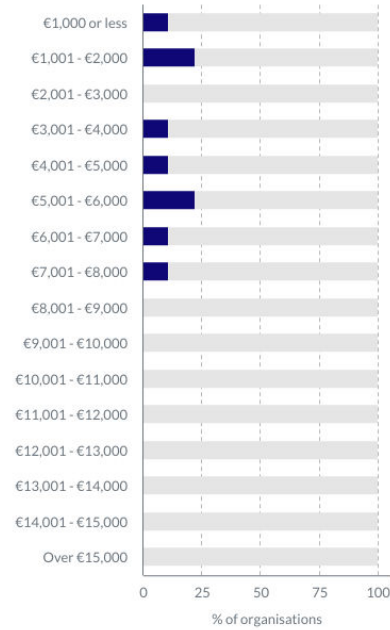
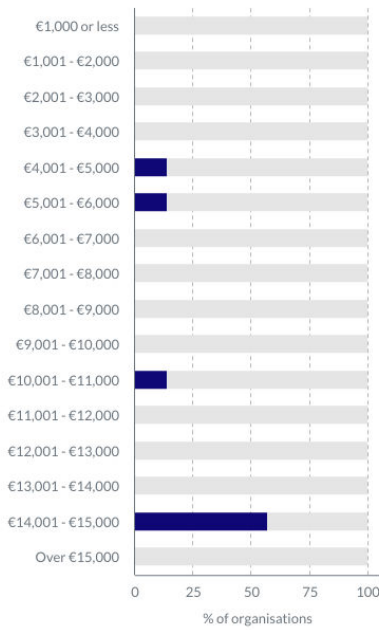
Production companies
Production Manager

9 responses
Average pay: €4,289

Theatre Forum: Review of Pay and Conditions in the Performing Arts 2022

Range: €5,000 - €23,000

Range: €5,500 - €7,500



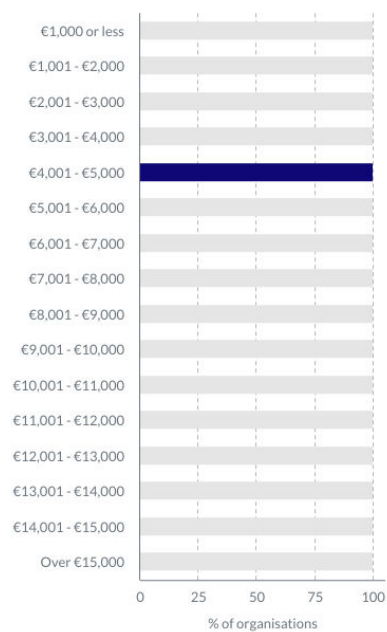
Venues
Production Manager

9 responses
Average pay: €3,444
Range: €500 - €7,500



Production companies
Company Manager

2 responses
Average pay: €5,000
Range: €5,000 - €5,000

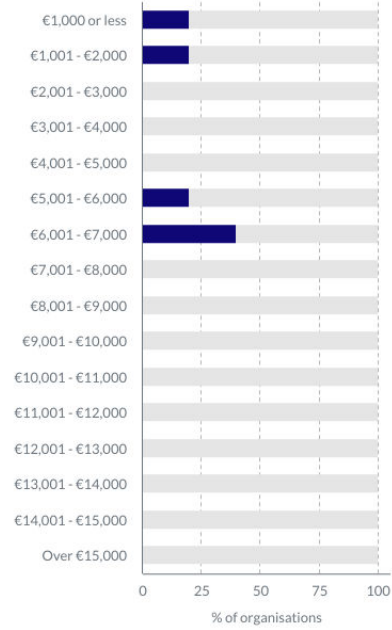
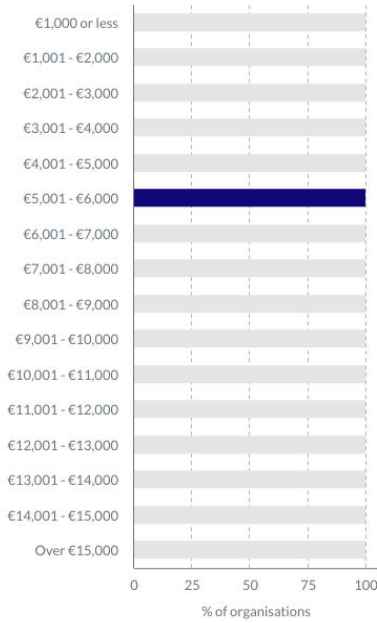


Festivals
Programme Manager

2 responses
Average pay: €6,000
Range: €6,000 - €6,000

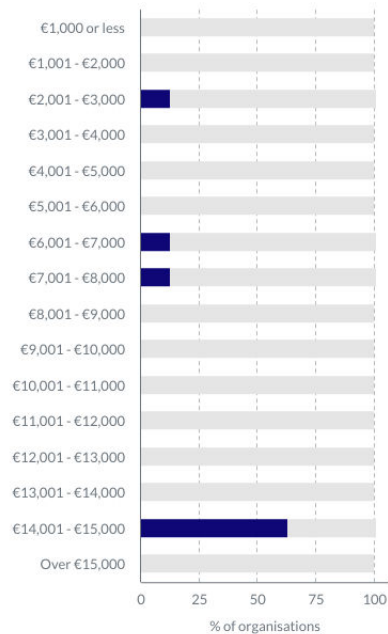
Festivals
Artist Liaison

5 responses
Average pay: €4,568
Range: €840 - €7,000



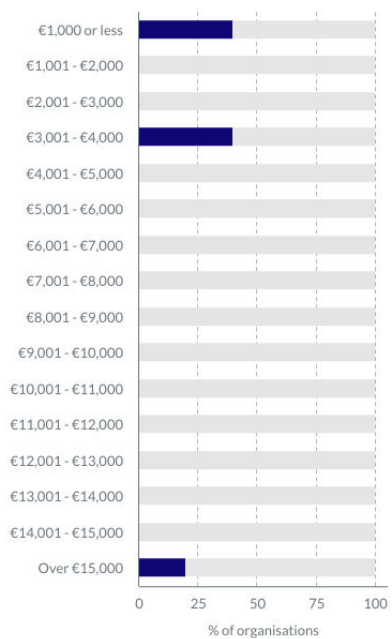
**Festivals
PR Manager / Publicist**

8 responses
Average pay: €14,250
Range: €2,500 - €27,500



**Production companies
Marketing / PR**

5 responses
Average pay: €1,417
Range: €500 - €68,500

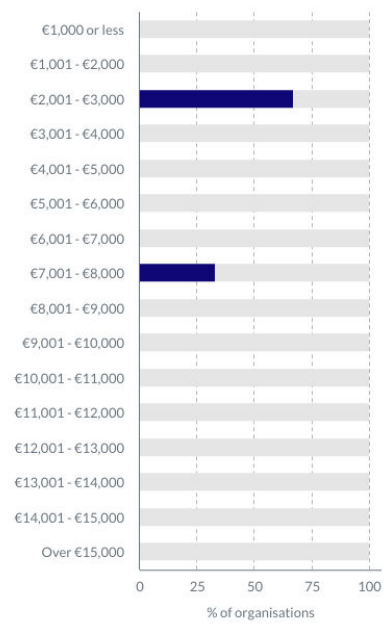
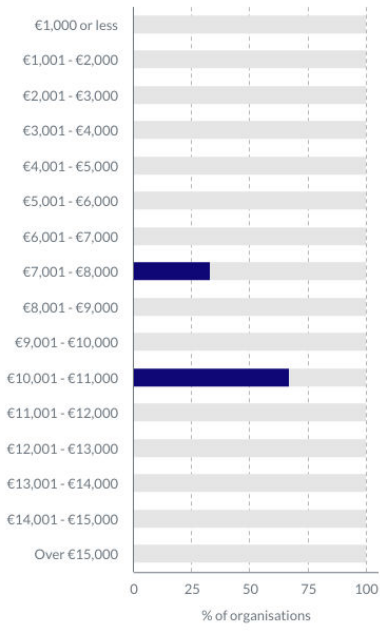


**Festivals
Box Office Manager**

3 responses
Average pay: €10,000
Range: €8,000 - €11,000

**Festivals
Volunteer Co-ordinator**

3 responses
Average pay: €4,500
Range: €3,000 - €7,500

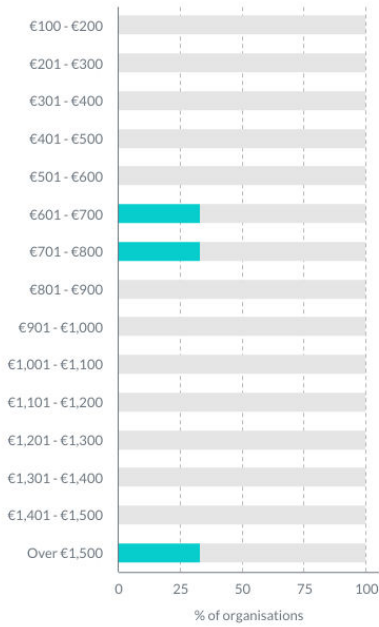


Section Two: Salaries, Fees and Rates

C: Weekly Production Fees

Production Companies
Assistant Director

3 responses
Average pay: €1,467
Range: €650 - €3,000



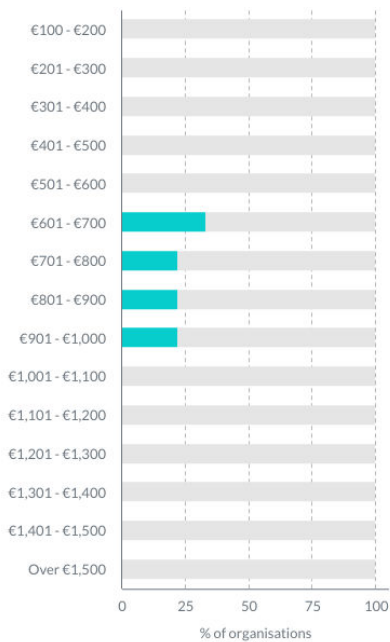
Festivals
Actor

2 responses
Average pay: €2,450
Range: €700 - €4,200



Production Companies
Actor

9 responses
Average pay: €819
Range: €650 - €1,000



Venues
Actor

9 responses
Average pay: €744
Range: €600 - €900



Production Companies

Dancer

6 responses

Average pay: €735

Range: €620 - €900



Venues

Dancer

2 responses

Average pay: €640

Range: €580 - €700



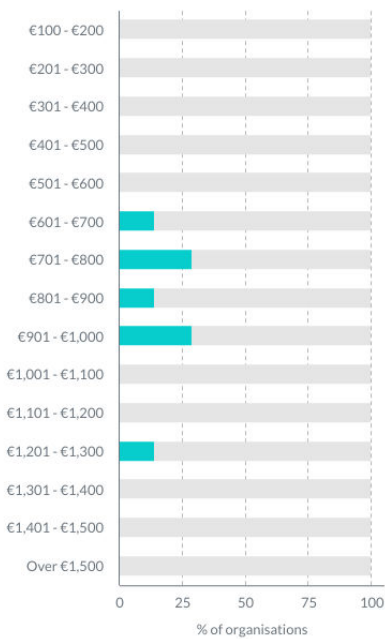
Production Companies

Musician

7 responses

Average pay: €911

Range: €700 - €1,250



Venues

Musician

6 responses

Average pay: €952

Range: €700 - €1,500



Production Companies

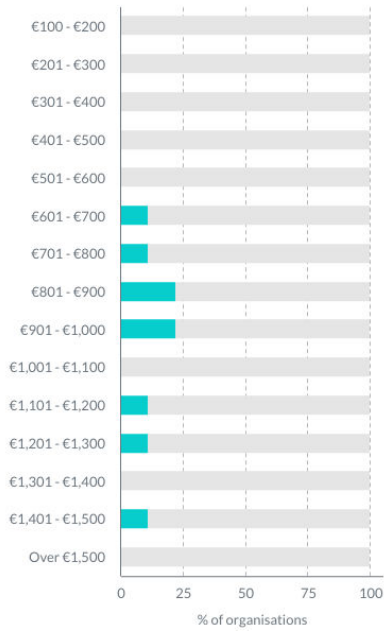
Venues

Production Manager

9 responses

Average pay: €1,028

Range: €700 - €1,500



Production Manager

5 responses

Average pay: €810

Range: €700 - €900

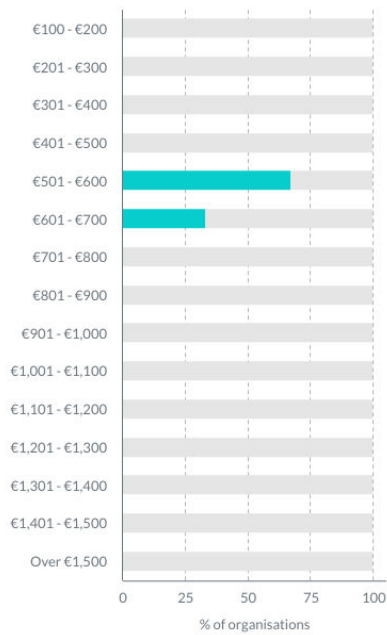


**Venues
Wardrobe**

3 responses

Average pay: €617

Range: €600 - €665



**Production Companies
Costume Assistant**

5 responses

Average pay: €740

Range: €600 - €900



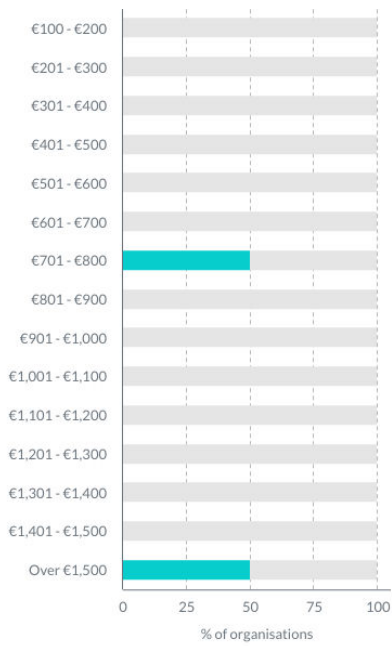
**Festivals
Lighting Operator**

**Production Companies
Lighting Operator**

2 responses

Average pay: €1,200

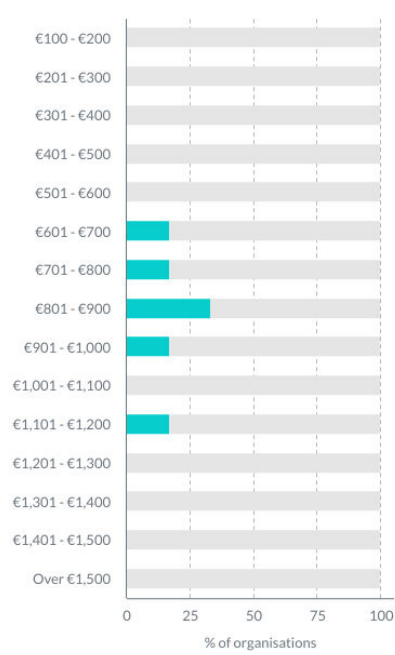
Range: €800 - €1,600



6 responses

Average pay: €900

Range: €700 - €1,150



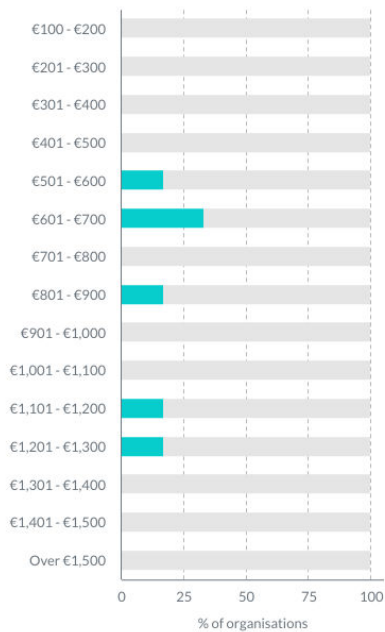
Venues

Lighting Operator

6 responses

Average pay: €892

Range: €600 - €1,250



Festivals

Sound Operator

Production Companies

Sound Operator

Theatre Forum: Review of Pay and Conditions in the Performing Arts 2022

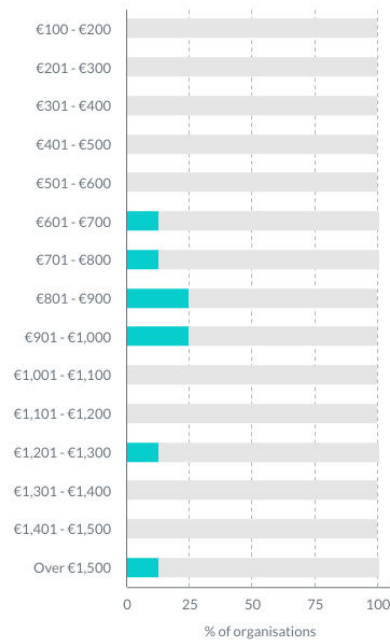
2 responses

Average pay: €1,200
Range: €800 - €1,600



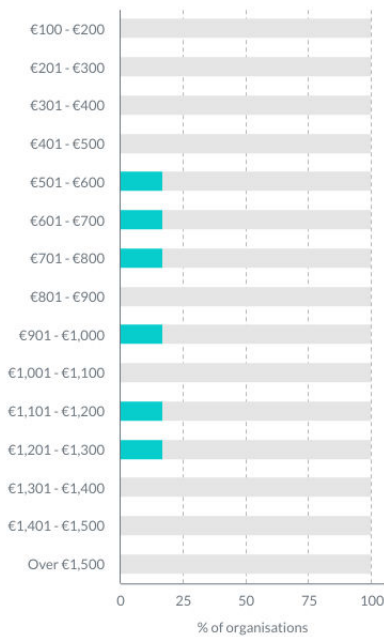
8 responses

Average pay: €1,138
Range: €700 - €2,600



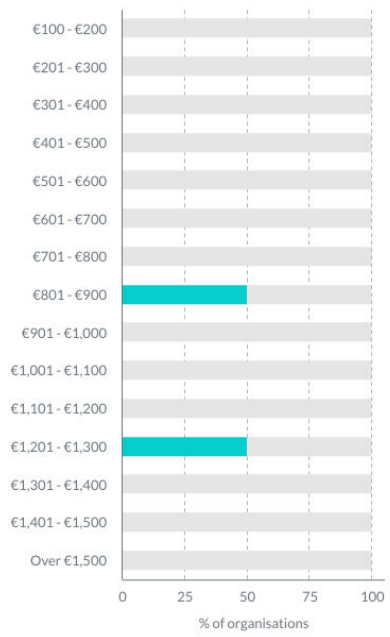
Venues
Sound Operator

6 responses
Average pay: €917
Range: €600 - €1,250



Production Companies
Stage Director

2 responses
Average pay: €1,050
Range: €850 - €1250



Festivals
Stage Manager

2 responses

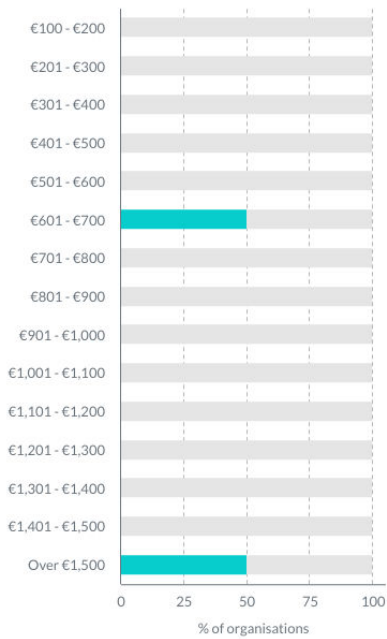
Production Companies
Stage Manager

14 responses

Theatre Forum: Review of Pay and Conditions in the Performing Arts 2022

Average pay: €2,450
Range: €700 - €4,200

Average pay: €969
Range: €417 - €2,400

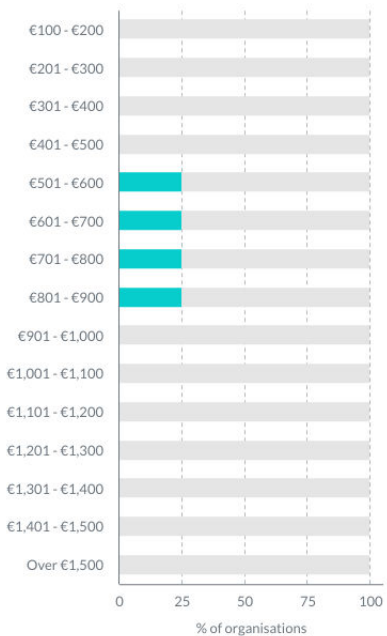


Venues

Stage Manager

8 responses

Average pay: €725
Range: €550 - €850



Production Companies

Assistant Stage Manager

3 responses

Average pay: €650

Venues

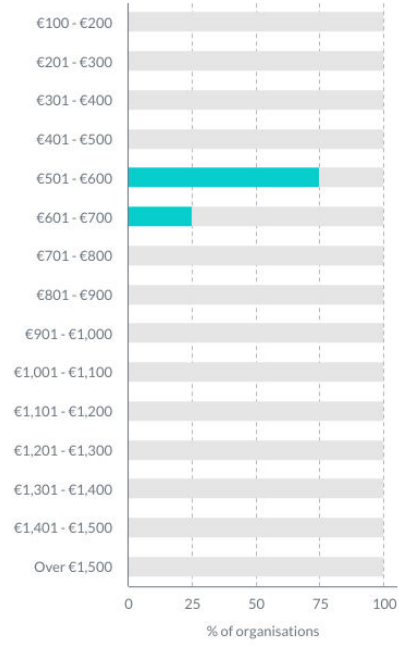
Assistant Stage Manager

4 responses

Average pay: €625

Range: €650 - €650

Range: €600 - €700



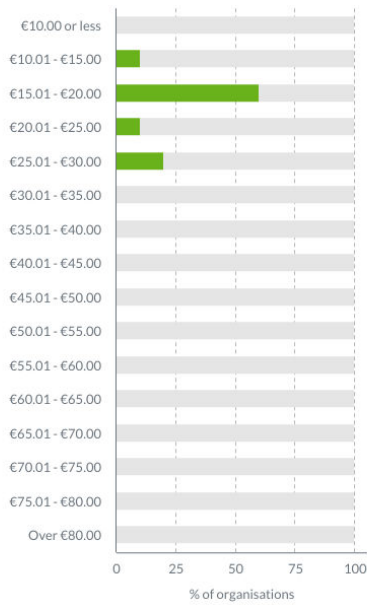
Section Two: Salaries, Fees and Rates

D: Hourly Rates

Production Companies
Lightboard operator

10 responses
Average pay: €20.17
Range: €11.30 - €35.00

Minimum



Maximum



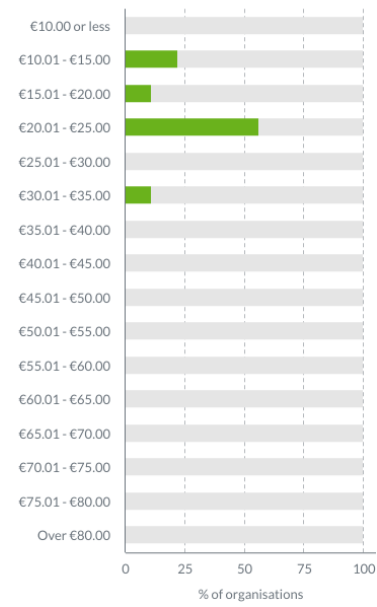
Production Companies
Sound operator

8 responses
Average pay: €18.97
Range: €11.30 - €35.00

Minimum



Maximum



Production Companies

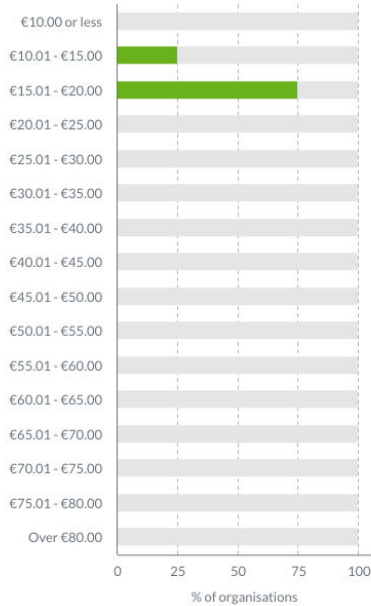
Follow spot operator

4 responses

Average pay: €15.83

Range: €11.30 - €25.00

Minimum



Maximum



Production Companies

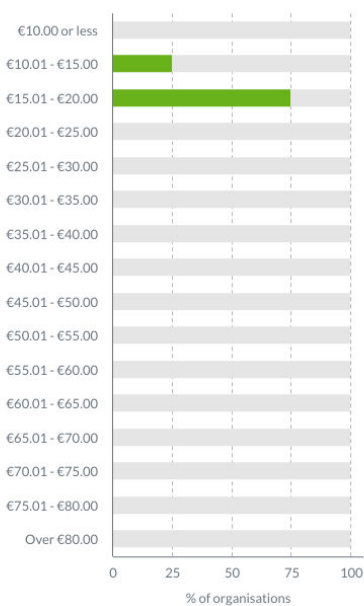
Fly operator

4 responses

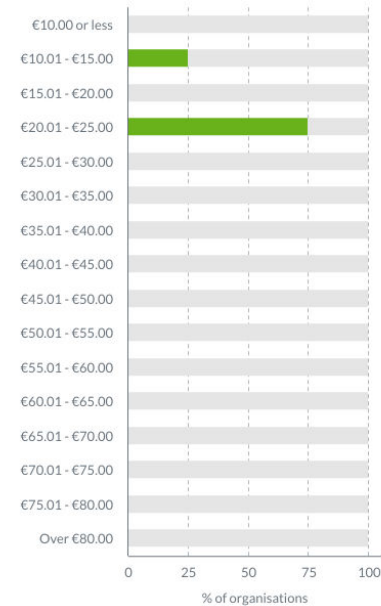
Average pay: €15.83

Range: €11.30 - €25.00

Minimum



Maximum



Venues

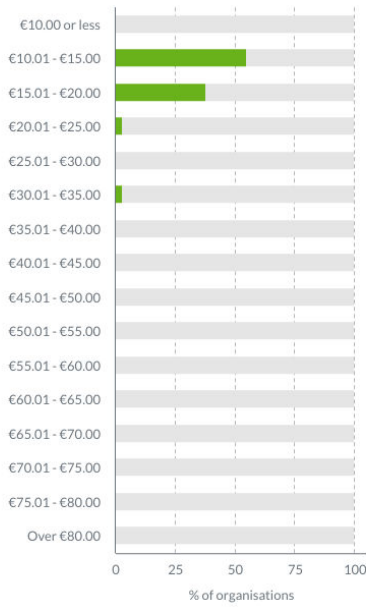
Technical staff e.g., operators

29 responses

Average pay: €17.21

Range: €11.30 - €40.00

Minimum



Maximum



Festivals

General technical staff

9 responses

Average pay: €17.63

Range: €13.70 - €40.00

Minimum



Maximum



Production Companies

Carpenter / Set

6 responses
 Average pay: €18.29
 Range: €11.30 - €45.00

Minimum



Maximum



**Production Companies
 Get in / Get out crew**

12 responses
 Average pay: €19.94
 Range: €11.30 - €45.00

Minimum



Maximum



**Venues
 Education / Workshop leaders**

18 responses
 Average pay: €39.67
 Range: €18.00 - €150.00

Minimum



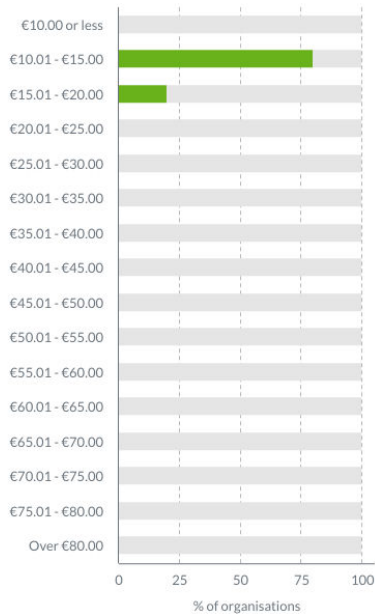
Maximum



**Venues
 Duty managers**

15 responses
 Average pay: €14.40
 Range: €10.50 - €23.00

Minimum



Maximum



**Festivals
 Box office assistants**

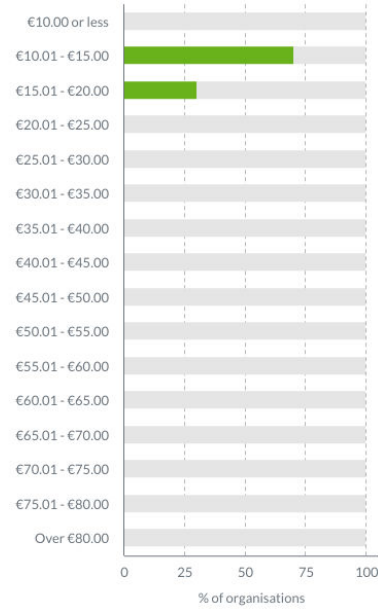
10 responses

Average pay: €12.87
Range: €11.00 - €20.00

Minimum



Maximum



Venues

Box office staff

26 responses
Average pay: €14.19
Range: €10.00 - €40.00

Minimum



Maximum

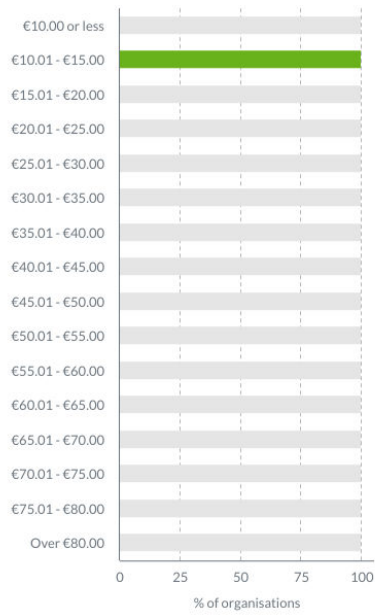


Festivals

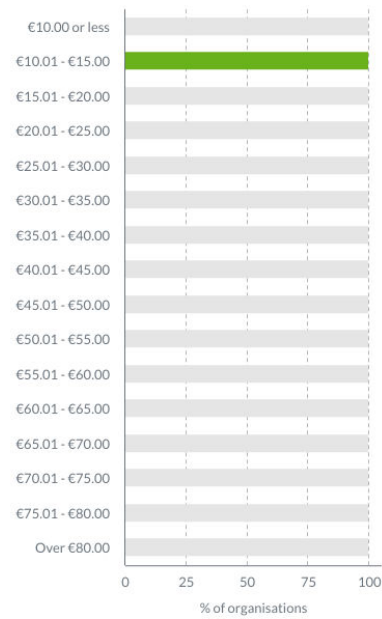
Ushers

5 responses
Average pay: €11.80

Minimum



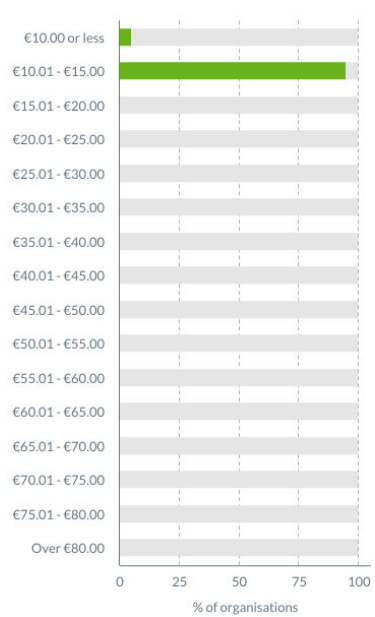
Maximum



**Venues
Ushers**

21 responses
 Average pay: €11.61
 Range: €10.00 - €50.00

Minimum



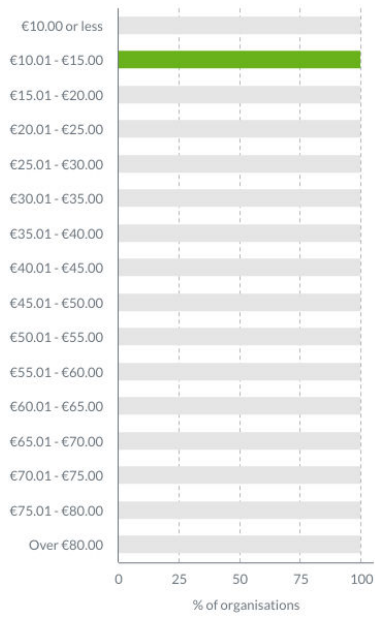
Maximum



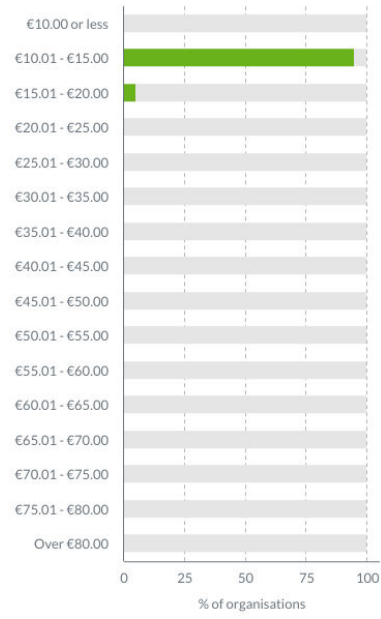
**Venues
Bar staff**

21 responses
 Average pay: €11.89
 Range: €10.50 - €16.00

Minimum



Maximum



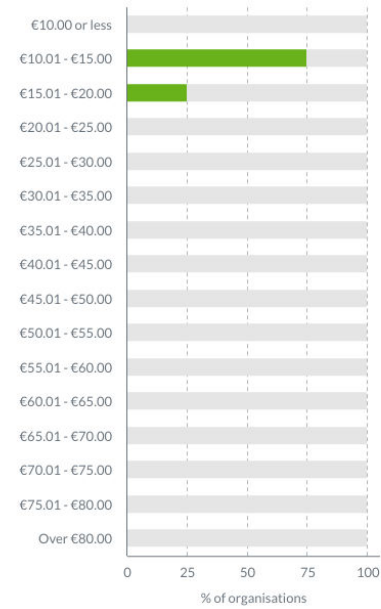
Venues
Cleaners

17 responses
Average pay: €12.55
Range: €10.00 - €20.00

Minimum



Maximum



Section Two: Salaries, Fees and Rates

E: Music Acts

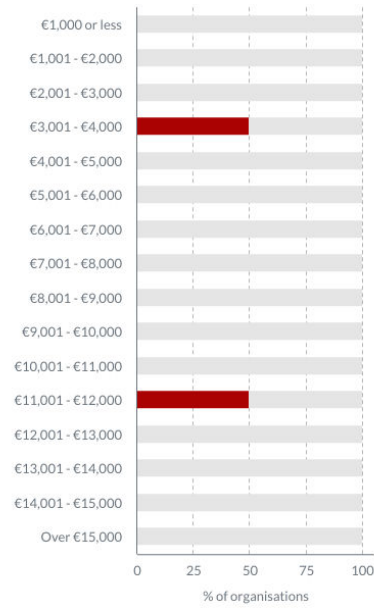
Festivals
Headline Music Acts

2 responses
Average fee: €1,250 - €8,000
Range: €1,000 - €12,000

Lowest



Highest



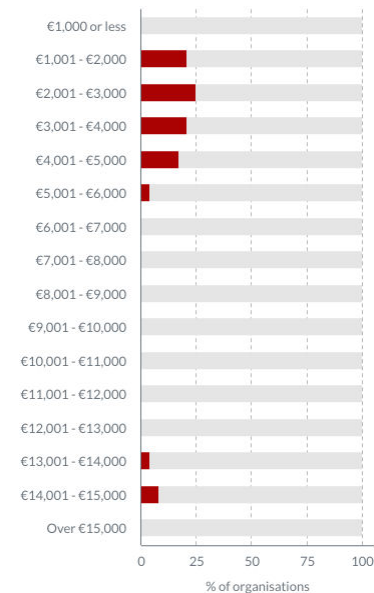
Venues
Headline Music Acts

21 responses
Average fee: €2,020 - €4,703
Range: €500 - €15,000

Lowest



Highest



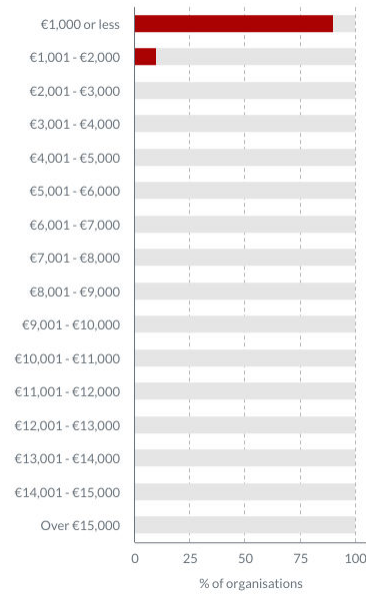
Venues
Aspiring Music Acts

20 responses
 Average fee: €629 - €1,295
 Range: €200 - €5,000

Lowest



Highest



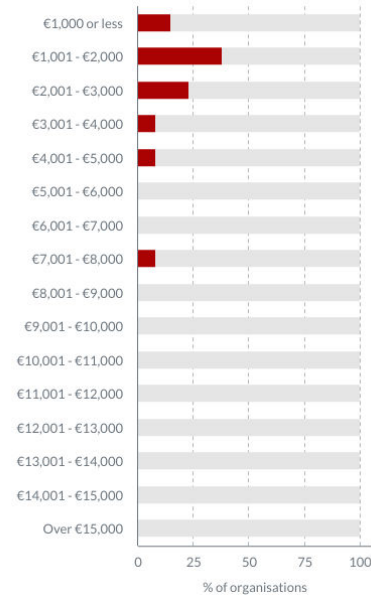
Venues
Other Music Acts

14 responses
 Average fee: €836 - €2,550
 Range: €350 - €7,500

Lowest



Highest



Section Three: Qualitative Responses

Individual respondents

What challenges or barriers did you face in the early stages of establishing your chosen career in the performing arts sector? Please tell us as much or as little as you wish.

What challenges or barriers do you now face in further developing a sustainable career in the performing arts sector?

Low pay and unpaid work

Key issues for the majority of respondents are long unpaid hours and poor recruitment and employment practice.

“Not knowing enough about my rights as an employee to advocate for myself to be paid more fairly early on. Not having a contract. Not having regular check ins to assess my work and no offer of increase in pay despite a constant and ongoing increase in workload and under-resourcing. ... No access to career progression. Ultimately realising that you're expected to work for less because you're in the creative sector and enjoy it.”

“Jobs are usually not advertised. I am employed by word of mouth, direct emails, recommendations and contacts from friends or colleagues. It is entirely who you know, not what you know.”

“I felt unable to say no to unpaid overtime, that was expected but never compensated - In my early twenties, low pay was a barrier but manageable however I fear it will be completely unsustainable if I ever want to own a home or have a family, and I will have to leave the sector.”

“Exploitative working conditions, financial instability, bad work-life balance.”

“When I started in theatre, ... I often felt as though I needed to push my body beyond what it was capable of just to prove myself and ended up with long-term injuries as a result. I also struggled to set clear boundaries with my time - I was often expected to work 14-hour shifts with less than 11 hours in between shifts or work through breaks and then struggled to get paid for these hours. I still come up against these problems, but I am more confident in setting my boundaries these days. It has meant that I

have a lot less work as I am not willing to work under these conditions, but I have needed to put my mental and physical health first."

For emerging artists and sector workers, additional challenges are breaking into what is often seen as a closed shop and having to work unpaid or for very low pay in order to do so.

"Building up a network - attempting to find work when you're new to the sector can be very challenging. Finding a balance between paid / unpaid / profit-share work to be able to sustain my career."

"Having to keep another line of work going at the same time to subsidise my career in the performing arts sector which then prolonged the beginning of my sustainable full time and long-term career in the arts. ... 'Closed shop' nature of the sector."

"I got into my area of the arts through an internship where I was paid just €50 a week for 6 months - I would not have been able to do this without the support of my family, who themselves are not particularly wealthy."

"There are very few, if any, "entry-level" performing arts positions aside from Front of House and Box Office positions, which offer very little in terms of potential career advancement opportunities."

Impact of having to balance developing a career with the need to earn a living and fulfil responsibilities at home

Many respondents report that they have had to choose between their career and family life.

"As a working-class artist, I have absolutely no safety net to take time out for auditions/meetings/creative practice/working on profit share so I have sacrificed a lot just to be able to work in my chosen field. I have no children no savings no mortgage and I'm 30 years old. I'm scared for my future and I'm looking at working in alternative areas to subsidise my arts work which breaks my heart."

"Oftentimes I have to work for free or for a tiny fee in order to build up my portfolio and reputation. I was combining another two part-time jobs along with the Social Welfare Casual Worker Allowance (I wasn't entitled to benefits as I was earning income as a freelance in the performing arts sector, although my income was below €5,000). Still, I had to ask my family for financial help in order to pay my rent on a few occasions."

"I now have a baby and can't afford fulltime childcare when not working on a job - therefore finding the time/space to create my own projects is impossible right now. When being cast in projects, I rely on my husband

and family to fill the gaps. Touring theatre is not an option right now and when taping for film roles, I am always concerned about juggling logistics.”

“I am middle aged and live at home because I can't afford rent or a mortgage. There is seemingly no interest in improving my pay in my current role, despite me bringing a breadth of varied experience and skill that cover the workload of multiple employees on my tiny wage. I am overworked and feel undervalued, I see no option for personal or professional career development, and now realise that if I am to improve my life situation I am considering leaving this sector and taking my skills and experience elsewhere. Something that is emotionally very hard to do as I have put so much into the last decade but cannot financially or personally continue to do so.”

Financial insecurity

“As my work is largely dependent on what feels like an unreliable, ever changing, extremely competitive funding system I feel I have very little agency over the work that I do. I feel like I am entering lotteries to work, constantly pitching without any guarantee of success, it feels like gambling sometimes. I feel the quality of my work and my development as an artist is handicapped by this lack of agency and a resultant ‘blowing in the wind’ caused by having to chase opportunities and shoehorn projects into funding opportunities. Burn out is a constant risk. I end up overworking at times because it is so hard to know when the next opportunity will come or so hard to manage opportunities when you hear about funding so close to when a project needs to be done.”

“Lack of production support and funding, consumed in work otherwise it’s not viable, burnout, vicious circle.”

Potential solutions

What would help address these challenges or barriers?

Many respondents report that the Basic Income for the Arts scheme has had a positive impact with assistance with housing and childcare also recurring themes. Pension and mortgage schemes for artists and sector workers would also improve financial security:

“If the basic income for the arts pilot scheme is successful, it would allow me to focus and create work for myself that would make me financially

independent sooner than without, allowing me to save money for longer too."

"Initiatives like the Basic Income for Artists are a great step in the right direction, and I hope this can be availed of by more artists."

"Basic Income for the Arts would be a great first step to provide peace of mind and some consistency. It would also be great if childcare costs outside of regular childcare times could be included in funding applications."

"I am based in Galway, which is heavily affected by the housing crisis, as is Dublin. Both cities are where I have found the most work and they are both almost impossible to afford to live in. The basic income scheme for people working in the arts will be hugely helpful to so many who may not be able to rely on a steady income if it is expanded and implemented well. I also feel that a decentralisation of the arts away from Dublin would be helpful, especially as remote working is now a more viable option."

"Not sure really, as it's all-round economic crisis at the moment. There are grants and supports out there for artists and well-paid jobs, however it's the inability of being able to buy a house that has me considering another career."

Several respondents suggest that longer term funding for arts organisations would reduce the financial insecurity of the people they employ and contract:

"A fundamental change to the funding structure of arts in Ireland. Yearly funding does not allow companies time to plan far enough in advance to offer arts workers any form of stability. The majority of the issues arts workers face is due to the insecurity of a gig economy."

"A pension scheme for artists and arts workers supported by the government. More permanent contracts that the arts council or local authorities commit to supporting (I have often been told in arts organisations that due to the instability of funding structures a permanent contract can't be offered)."

Others believe that more realistic budgeting of arts events and activities would enable fair remuneration and conditions for artists and arts workers:

"Expanded production budgets to allow for assistants/job sharing/sick pay/flexibility in contracts."

Many respondents demand improvements in employment practices across the sector:

“Better protections for technicians and facilitators to prevent companies taking advantage of them and working them into the ground. I think a lot of companies take for granted that for them a tech week or crunch period trying to get a show up is something that happens once every few months, but for a lot of technicians, house techs and crew, they are going from fit up/tech/load out almost every week and it’s not healthy or sustainable.”

“Employers adhering to working time legislation, even if it's a grey area so far as freelancers and nominally "self-employed" crew are concerned. No one should be scheduled for an 80-hour week, and certainly if they receive a flat fee that's based on a 40-hour week and are not paid overtime. An 80-hour week means it's a job for 2 people.”

Festivals, Production Companies and Venues

What challenges or barriers do artists and other individuals working in the sector face in further developing their careers in the performing arts sector?

Responses from arts organisations address the same themes as those from individual artists and sector workers. Many acknowledge heightened levels of financial insecurity and how this limits creative development but believe that solutions must be systemic:

“A lack of production opportunities. Independent sector has been hollowed out and needs to return to presenting transformative drama alongside post-dramatic work. High cost of living. Restricted budgets everywhere. Lack of transparency and engagement of major strategic organisations with freelance artists.”

“Due to lack of funding, salaries cannot keep up with increases in cost of living.”

“Enough funding to pay a liveable wage to those working in the Arts Centre.”

“In the arts sector there are very few salaried roles and fewer that offer career progression. This is a major barrier.”

“Lack of full-time work opportunities”

“Little funding allocated in grants towards staffing of venues/arts centres. Minimum wage has increased by 7% since start of 2022. 11.30 ph. Many arts workers working just above this rate. Less grant support for operations means more drive towards fundraising and income generation without ability to fund development support. More demand on venues to

raise income through rentals, box office income limits availability of space in-kind and technical in-kind to support artists and impacts on costs for artist development and support including financial support.”